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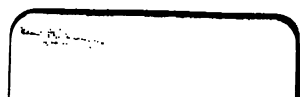
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THREE FEATHERS.

A Novel.

BY WILLIAM BLACK,

AUTHOR OF

"A PRINCESS OF THULE," "A DAUGHTER OF HETH," ETC.



IN THREE VOLUMES.—Vol. II.

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CONTENTS OF VOL. II.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE FAIR SPRING-TIME ...	1
II. ONLY A BASKET OF PRIMROSES ...	24
III. CONFIDENCES ...	45
IV. THE FIRST MESSAGE HOME ...	59
V. TINTAGEL'S WALLS ...	74
VI. CONFESSION ...	113
VII. ON WINGS OF HOPE ...	133
VIII. LOVE-MAKING AT LAND'S END ...	147
IX. THE CUT DIRECT ...	177
X. NOT THE LAST WORD ...	194
XI. A PERILOUS TRUCE ...	209
XII. FURTHER ENTANGLEMENTS ...	237
XIII. FAREWELL! ...	246



THREE FEATHERS.



CHAPTER I.

THE FAIR SPRING-TIME.

THE spring-time had indeed arrived—rapidly and imperceptibly ; and all at once it seemed as if the world had grown green, and the skies fair and clear, and the winds sweet with a new and delightful sweetness. Each morning that Wenna went out brought some further wonder with it—along the budding hedgerows, in the colours of the valley, in the fresh warmth of the air, and the white light of the skies. And at last the sea began to show its

deep and resplendent summer blue, when the morning happened to be still, and there was a silvery haze along the coast.

“Mabyn, is your sister at home? And do you think she could go up to the Hall for a little while, for my mother wants to see her? And do you think she would walk round by the cliffs—for it is such a capital morning—if you came with her?”

“Oh yes, Mr. Trelyon,” said Mabyn, readily, and with far more respect and courtesy than she usually showed to the young gentleman, “I am quite sure Wenna can go; and I know she would like to walk round by the cliffs—she is always glad to do that—and I will tell her to get ready instantly. But *I* can’t go, Mr. Trelyon—I am exceedingly busy this morning.”

“Why, you have been reading a novel!”

“But I am about to be exceedingly busy,” said Mabyn, petulantly. “You can’t expect people to be always working

—and I tell you I can't go with you, Mr. Trelyon."

"Oh, very well," said he carelessly; "you needn't show your temper."

"*My temper!*" said Mabyn; but then recollecting herself, and smiling derisively, went away to fetch her sister.

When Wenna came outside into the white sunlight, and went forward to shake hands with him, with her dark eyes lit up by a friendly smile, it seemed to him that not for many a day—not certainly during all the time of her engagement with Mr. Roscorla—had he seen her look so pleased, happy, and contented. She still bore that quiet gravity of demeanour which had made him call her the little Puritan, and there was the same earnestness in her eyes as they regarded any one; but there was altogether a brighter aspect about her face that pleased him exceedingly. For he was very well disposed to this shy and yet matter-of-

fact young lady, and was alternately amused by the quaintness of her motherly ways in dealing with the people about her, and startled into admiration by some sudden glimpse of the fine sincerity of her nature. He had done more to please her—he had gone to church several times, and tried to better his handwriting, and resolved to be more careful in speaking of parsons in her presence—than he ever thought he could have done to please any woman.

So these two set forth on this bright and cheerful morning ; and one would have said, to see them as they went, that two happier young folks were not within the county of Cornwall at that moment. Wenna had a pleasant word for every one that passed ; and when they had gone by the mill, and reached the narrow path by the tiny harbour, where no more neighbours were to be seen, she appeared to transfer her abounding sympathy to all the objects around her,

and she spoke to them, and laughed to them, so that all the world seemed to be friendly with her. Her sister used to say that her fingers tingled to the very tips with kindness; and at this moment she seemed as though she could have kissed her hand to all the birds and animals around, and wished them joy that they had so fine a morning.

“Ho, ho! Mr. Porpoise,” she laughed and said, as she saw far below her a big fish slowly heel over in the blue water of the harbour; “don’t you come too far up, or you won’t like the stones in the stream, I know!”

There was a hawk hovering high in the air over Blackcliff—Trelyon was watching it keenly.

“Oh, go away, you bad bird,” she cried, “and let the poor little things alone!” And sure enough, at this moment, the motionless speck up there began to flutter

its wings, and presently it sailed away over the cliff, and was seen no more.

“Mother Sheep,” she said to the inattentive custodian of two very small lambs with very thick legs and uncertain gait, “why don’t you look after your children? you’ll have them tumbling down the rocks into the sea in about a minute—that’s about what you’ll do!”

“Boom!” she said to a great humble-bee that flew heavily by; and to a white butterfly that went this way and that over the warm grass on the hillside she called out, “My pretty lady, aren’t you glad the summer is coming?”

She talked to the white and grey gulls that were wheeling over the sea, and to the choughs flying hither and thither about the steep precipices of the cliff. They did not answer her; but that was no matter. From her childhood she had believed that she knew them all, and that they knew her;

and that even the cliffs, and the sea, and the clouds regarded her, and spoke to her in a strange and silent fashion. Once she had come back from the mouth of the harbour on a sultry afternoon, when as yet the neighbours had heard nothing of the low mutterings of the distant and coming storm ; and when her mother asked the child why she was so silent, she said, "I have been listening to God walking on the sea."

Well, they sat down on a seat which fronted the wide opening in the cliffs and the great plain of the Atlantic beyond, that was this morning of a light and sunny sea-green, with here and there broad purple stains of shadow as the summer clouds passed rapidly over the sky from the west. In the warm sunshine, the gorse on the hill behind them, and the grass on the pasture-land, sweetened the air. The wind blew fresh in from the sea ;

and as the green waves broke white along the rocks beneath them, the brisk breeze carried with it a flavour of salt from the fine clouds of the spray. The spring-time seemed to have given life and colour to the sea as well as to the land, for all the world was brilliant with the new brightness of the skies.

“And isn’t it first-rate,” said Master Harry, wishing to say something very pleasant to his companion, “that Mr. Roscorla is having such fine weather on his way out? I am sure you would have been very anxious if there had been any storms about. I hope he will be successful; he’s a good sort of fellow.”


No one who was not acquainted with this young gentleman could have guessed at the dire effort he had to make in order to pronounce these few sentences. He was not accustomed to say formally civil things. He was very bad at paying compliments;

and as for saying anything friendly of Mr. Roscorla, he had to do it with a mental grimace. But Wenna was very familiar with the lad and his ways. At another time she would have been amused and pleased to observe his endeavours to be polite ; and now, if she hastened away from the subject, it was only because she never heard Mr. Roscorla's name mentioned without feeling embarrassment and showing it. She murmured something about a hope that Mr. Roscorla would not find the voyage to Jamaica fatiguing ; and then, somewhat hastily, drew her companion's attention to another porpoise which was showing itself from time to time outside the rocks.

“ I wish Roscorla had made me your guardian in his absence,” said this blundering young man, who was determined to be on his best behaviour. “ I quite agree with Mabyn that you over-

work yourself in doing for other people what the lazy beggars ought to do for themselves. Oh, I know more than you think. I'd wake some of them up if I had the chance. Why, they look on you as a sort of special Providence, bound to rescue them at any moment. I was told only yesterday of old Mother Truscott having said to a neighbour, 'Well, if Miss Wenna won't help me, then the Lord's will be done.' "

"Oh yes, I know," said his companion, with some impatience; "she is always saying that. I said to her the other day, when I got out of temper, 'Why, of course the Lord's will will be done; you don't suppose he wants your permission? But if you'd only look after your own house, and bestir yourself, and keep it smart, your husband wouldn't go on as he does.' There's nothing I hate worse than that sort of pretended piety. Why, when Abiathar




Annot's boy died, I thought he'd be out of his senses with grief, and I went up to see if he was all right about the house, and to say a friendly word to him; and directly I went into the house he said to me, quite complacently, 'Well, Miss Rosewarne, you know we must bow to the will of the Lord, and accept his chastenings as mercies.' 'Oh,' said I, 'if you take it that way, I've no more to say,' and I left the place. I don't believe in all that sort of——"

She suddenly stopped, recollecting to whom she was speaking. Were these proper confessions to be made to a young man who had such a godless hatred of parsons, and churches, and all good things; and whose conversion to more respectable ways she had many a time wished to attempt? She dropped that subject; and Master Harry was so resolved to be proper and virtuous that morning, that he took no advantage of what she had said. He even,

in an awkward fashion, observed that all pious people were not hypocrites; one had to draw distinctions. Of course there were pious people who were really sincere. He hoped Miss Wenna would not suspect him of being so prejudiced as not to know that. Miss Wenna was a little inclined to smile, but she controlled her lips; and Master Harry, having paid these ingenuous compliments to virtue and religion, rose with a frank sigh of relief, proposed that they should continue their walk up the hill, and was soon engaged in telling her—with a much gayer tone in his voice and with a return to his old impertinent carelessness—of some wild adventure in cliff-hunting which he and his faithful Dick had encountered together.

They seemed to be in no great hurry, these two. It was a morning that invited to idleness. They chatted about all sorts of things, or were silent, with equal and

happy indifference: he watching the sea-birds, she stooping from time to time to pick up some tiny flower of pale yellow or purple. In this fashion they made their way up to the summit of the cliffs, and there before them lay the great plain of the windy sea, and the long wall of precipice running down into the south-west, and the high and bleak uplands, marked by the square towers of small and distant churches. They struck across the fields to one of those churches—that which Master Harry had been persuaded to visit. The place was now silent enough: two jackdaws sat on the slender weather-cock; the sunlight was warm on the silvery grey tower, and on the long green grass in the churchyard, in which the first daisies of the spring had appeared. Then they went down through some narrow lanes towards the higher portion of Eglosilyan; and under the hedges were masses of pale primroses, and



the purple blossoms of the ground-ivy, and the golden stars of the celandine. They drew near some of the cottages ; and in the gardens the flowering currant was in bloom, and everywhere there was a scent of wall-flower. They crossed the main thoroughfare of the village ; it was empty but for the presence of a small boy, who, with a slate slung on one side and a bag made of carpet slung on the other, had apparently been sent home from school for some reason or other. The youthful scholar most respectfully took off his cap to Miss Wenna as she gave him a kindly greeting in passing.

“They say all that is owing to you,” Trelyon remarked.

“All what ? ”

“The good manners of the people in this village. The women bob you a curtsy as you pass, the girls say good-morning or good-evening, the boys take off their caps, even if you are a perfect stranger. But you

don't suppose that happens in every village in Cornwall? My mother was speaking about it only this morning."

Wenna was sufficiently surprised to know that she had got the credit of the courtesy shown to strangers by the Eglosilyan folks; but even more surprised to learn that Master Harry had deigned to engage in conversation with his mother. He also seemed to be taking his first lessons in civility.

"Oh," she said, "that boy ought to pay me every attention to make up for his bad conduct. He was once a sweetheart of mine, and he deceived me. He sold me for sixpence."

She sighed.

"It is true. He adopted me as his sweetheart, and every time I saw him he promised to marry me when he grew up. But there came a change. He avoided me, and I had to catch him, and ask him why.

He confessed. I wasn't his sweetheart any more. His elder brother, aged ten, I think, had also wanted me for a sweetheart, and he had a sixpence; and sixpence was the price of a new sort of spinning-top that had just been put into the window at the Post-office; and the elder brother proposed to the younger brother to take the sixpence and buy the top, and hand me over. 'So yü baint my sweetheart anny mower,' said that young gentleman, forgetting his good English in his grief. But I think he has a tender recollection of me even now."

"I'd have thrashed the little brute for his meanness, if I had been you," said her companion, in his off-hand way.

"Oh no," she answered, with a meek sarcasm; "wasn't he only doing as a child what grown-up gentlemen are said to do? When there is money on the one hand and a sweetheart on the other, is not the sweetheart ordinarily thrown over?"

“What can you know about it?” he said bluntly. “In any case, *you* don’t run any danger. Mr. Roscorla is not likely to be tempted by bags of gold.”

Mr. Roscorla—always Mr. Roscorla. Wenna, who crimsoned deeply at the slightest reference to the relations between herself and her absent lover, began to be somewhat angry with this thoughtless lad, who would continually introduce the name. What was his object in doing so? To show her that he never failed to remember her position, and that that was his excuse for talking very frankly to her, as he would have done to a sister? Or merely to please her by speaking of one who ought to be very dear to her? She was not indebted to him for this blundering effort of kindness; and on any less cheerful morning might have visited him with one of those fits of formal politeness or of constrained silence with which young ladies are ac-

customed to punish too forward acquaintances.

But Miss Wenna had it not in her heart to be reserved on this pleasant forenoon; she good-naturedly overlooked the pertinacious mistakes of her companion; and talked to him—and to the flowers, and birds, and trees around her—with a happy carelessness, until the two of them together made their way up to the Hall. Just as Master Harry opened the gate at the end of the avenue, and turned to let her through, he seemed for the first time to notice her dress. He made no scruple of stopping her for a moment to look at it.

“Oh, I say, I wish you could get my mother to dress like you!”

The burst of admiration was so genuine that Miss Wenna—being only a girl—was very much pleased indeed; and blushed a little, and would rather have passed on. There was nothing, indeed, remarkable

about her costume—about the rough light grey dress with its touches here and there of blue, nor yet about the white hat with its forget-me-nots and big white daisies—except that it seemed to fit well a very pretty figure, and also that the blue suited the dark and clear complexion and the dark eyes and hair.

“I’m sick of her stalking about the house in the guise of a ghost—she all white, everything else black. I say, Wenna, don’t you think you could get her to dress like a human being?”

“But if it is her wish, you ought to respect it.”

“It’s only a craze,” he said impatiently.

“It may seem so to you,” his companion said; “but she has her own reasons for it, and they deserve your sympathy, even though they may not convince you. And you ought not to speak in that harsh way of

one who is so very good and gentle, and who is so considerate towards you."

"Oh, you always find excuses for people," he said roughly. "Everybody should be considered, and respected, and have their fine feelings praised and coddled, according to you. Everybody is perfect, according to you."

"Oh dear, no," she said quite humbly. "I know one or two people whose conduct and habits, and their manners, too, might be very much improved indeed."

"I suppose you mean me?" he said.

"And if I did?" she said boldly. "Don't you think, when you want your mother to be just as you would have her to be, that she might turn round and say that there was a great deal more in you that she might wish to have altered? You know her manner of life is not necessarily wrong merely because you can't understand it. As for yours——"

“Go ahead!” he cried, with a loud and suddenly good-natured laugh. “Heap up all my sins on my head! I’m getting used to be lectured now. Please, Miss Puritan, would you like me to get a surplice and come and sing hymns in the choir?”

Miss Puritan did not answer. There was no look of annoyance on her face—only a certain calm reserve that told her companion that he had somehow wounded the friendly confidence that had sprung up between them during this pleasant morning ramble. And at this moment they reached the front of the Hall, where Mrs. Trelyon came forward to greet her visitor; so that Master Harry had no further opportunity just then of asking her whether he had offended her, and of making an apology. He listened for a few minutes to his mother talking to Wenna about that Sewing Club. He became impatient with himself, and vexed, for Wenna seemed in no wise to

recognize his presence; and of course his mother did not ask his advice about the purchase of flannel. He tossed about the books on the table; he teased an Angola cat that was lying before the fire until it tried to bite him, and then he put its nose into the water of a flower-vase. With the feather of a quill dipped in ink he drew a fox on one of the white tiles of the fireplace; and then he endeavoured to remove that work of art with the edge of a scarlet and gold footstool. These various occupations affording him no relief, he got up, stretched his legs, and said to his mother—

“Mother, you keep her here for lunch. I shall be back at two.”

“Oh, but I can’t stay so long,” Wenna said, suddenly; “I know I shall be wanted at home.”

“Oh no, you won’t,” the young gentleman said, coolly, “I know you won’t. Mabyn told me so. Besides, I am going

down now to tell them you will be back at four."

And so he went away, but his walk down to the inn was not as pleasant as that roundabout ramble up to the Hall had been.

CHAPTER II.

ONLY A BASKET OF PRIMROSES.

“WHAT a busy life you must lead,” said Mrs. Trelyon, looking with a gentle wonder at the young lady before her. “You seem to know how to do anything.”

Miss Wenna coloured a little, and said something about having had to help her mother for many years past.

“And such a knowledge of the world as you have!” Mrs. Trelyon continued, unconsciously staring at the girl as if she were some strange phenomenon. “Where did you get it?”

“That I am sure I have not got,” Wenna said, brightening considerably, “for the strangers who come to the inn of course

don't speak to me, except one or two of the very old ladies sometimes, and all they speak about is the scenery. But Mabyn and I read the remarks in the Visitors' Book, and these are very amusing, especially the poetry that the young gentlemen write; and indeed, Mrs. Trelyon, if one were to judge by that book, one would think that the world was very silly. The elderly gentlemen generally praise the cooking; the elderly ladies generally say something nice about the cleanliness of the bedrooms and the good attendance; and the young ladies write about anything, recommending other visitors to go to particular places, or saying what they think of the Cornish peasantry. I am sure they are all very good-natured to us, and say very nice things of the inn; but then it looks so silly. And the young gentlemen are far the worst—especially the University young gentlemen, for they write such stupid

poetry and make such bad jokes. I suppose it is that the fresh air gives them very good spirits, and they don't care what they say, and they never expect that their friends will see what they have written. I have noticed, though, that the walking gentlemen never write such things when they are leaving, for they are always too anxious about the number of miles they have to get over on that day, and they are always anxious, too, about the heels of their stockings. If you would like to see the book——”

Wenna stopped. Mrs. Trelyon had been very good in extending a sort of acquaintance to her, and now proposed to help her in a way with her work. But she was going too far in expecting that this reserved and silent lady should become a visitor at the inn, or interest herself in its commonplace affairs. At this moment, indeed, Mrs. Trelyon was so very much

reserved, that she did not notice either Wenna's tentative invitation or her embarrassment when she cut it short.

"I wish," she said absently, showing what she had been thinking about, "I wish you could get Harry to go to one of the Universities."

It was now Wenna's turn to stare. Did the mother of that young gentleman seriously think that this stranger-girl had such an influence over him?

"Oh, Mrs. Trelyon," Wenna said, "how could I——?"

"He would do anything for you," the gentle lady said, with much simplicity and honesty. "He pays no attention to anything I say to him; but he would do anything for you. His whole manner changes when you are in the house. I think you are the only person in the world he is afraid of. And it was so good of you to get him to go to church."

"I am sure it was not I," said Wenna, getting rather afraid.

"But I know," said Mrs. Trelyon, quite affectionately, "for I have seen everybody else try and fail. You see, my dear, you are in a peculiar position. You are young, and a pleasant companion for a young man; and as you are no relation of his he is courteous to you. And then, you see, your being engaged to be married enables him to speak freely to you and treat you as a friend; and I think, besides, you have acquired some means of keeping him in check, and having authority over him, and I am sure he would do more for you than for any one I know. As for me, I have never had any control over him; but he is at least civil to me when you are in the room."


Wenna rose.

"Mrs. Trelyon," she said, "don't you think it is a pity to stay indoors on such

a beautiful morning? The air is quite mild and warm outside."

She was glad to get out. There was something in this declaration of her responsibility for the young man's conduct which considerably startled and frightened her. It was all very well for her to administer an occasional sharp reproof to him when he was laughing and joking with herself and Mabyn: but to become the recognized monitress of so wild a pupil as Master Harry—to have his own mother appeal to her—that was quite a different affair. And on this occasion, when Mrs. Trelyon had got a shawl, and come outside with her guest, all her talk was about her son, and his ways, and his prospects. It was very clear that with all her lamentations over his conduct, Mrs. Trelyon was very fond of the young man, and was quite assured too that he had the brains to do anything he might be induced

to undertake. Wenna listened in a vague way to all these complaints and speculations, and covert praises; she did not find her position so embarrassing in the open air as in that close drawing-room. They walked through the leafy alleys of the garden, unconsciously regarding the beautiful colour of the new spring flowers, and listening to the larks singing high up in the blue. From time to time, as they turned, they caught a glimpse of hills all ablaze with gorse; and near the horizon a long line of pale azure with a single white ship visible in the haze. On the other side of the valley a man was harrowing; they could hear him calling to the horses, and the jingling of the chains. Then there was the murmur of the stream far below, where the sunlight just caught the light green of the larches. These, and the constant singing of the birds around them, were the only sounds that accom-



panied their talk, as they wandered this way and that, by brilliant garden plots or through shaded avenues, where the air was sweet with the fresh scents of the opening summer.

And at last they came back to the proposal that Wenna should try to persuade Master Harry to go to Oxford or Cambridge.

"But, Mrs. Trelyon," the girl said earnestly, "I am quite sure you mistake altogether my relations with your son. I could not presume to give him advice. It would not be my place to do so even if we were on the footing of friends, and that, at present, is out of the question. Don't you see, Mrs. Trelyon, that because Mr. Trelyon in coming about the inn was good-natured enough to make the acquaintance of my father, and to talk to us girls, it would not do for any of us to forget how we are situated. I don't anyway—

perhaps because I am proud—but, at all events, I should not presume on Mr. Trelyon's good nature. Don't you see, Mrs. Trelyon?"

"I see that you are a very practical, and sensible, and plain-spoken young lady," her companion said, regarding her with a kindly look, "but I think you don't do my son justice. It is not thoughtlessness that made him make your acquaintance. I don't think he ever did a more prudent thing in his life before. And then, dear Miss Rosewarne, you must remember—if I may speak of such a thing—that you will soon be the wife of one of the very few friends we have about here; and you must excuse us if we claim you as a friend already, and try to take advantage of your friendship. Now, do you see that?"

Wenna was not persuaded; but she was, at all events, very pleased to see that occasionally Mrs. Trelyon could forget her

brooding sentimental fancies, and become comparatively bright and talkative.

"Now will you say a word to him when he comes home for lunch?"

"Oh no, I can't do that, Mrs. Trelyon," Wenna said, "it would be quite rude of me to do that. Besides, if you would not be displeased with me, Mrs. Trelyon, for saying so, I don't think going to a University would do him any good. I don't think—I hope you won't be vexed with me—that he has had sufficient schooling. And isn't there an examination before you could get in? Well, I don't know about that; but I am quite sure that if he did get in, he would be too proud to put himself in competition with the other young men who were properly prepared for study, and he would take to boating, or cricket, or some such thing. Now, don't you think, Mrs. Trelyon, he would be as well occupied in amusing

himself here, where you might gradually get him to take an interest in something besides shooting and fishing? He knows far more things than most people fancy, I know that. My father says he is very clever and can pick up anything you tell him; and that he knows more about the management of an estate, and about the slate quarries, and about mining too, than people imagine. And as for me," added the girl bravely, "I will say this, that I think him very clever indeed, and that he will make a straightforward and honourable man, and I should like to see him in Parliament, where he would be able to hold his own, I know."

"Oh, my dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Trelyon, with a joyful face, "I am so grateful to you. I am so proud to know you think so highly of him. And won't you say a word to him? He will do whatever you please."

But Miss Wenna had somehow been startled into that confession, and the sudden burst of honesty left her considerably ashamed and embarrassed. She would not promise to intermeddle in the matter, whatever she had been induced to say about the future of the young man. She stooped to pick up a flower to cover her confusion, and then she asked Mrs. Trelyon to be good enough to excuse her staying to lunch.

“Oh, no, I dare not do that,” Mrs. Trelyon said; “Harry would pull the house down when he found I had let you go. You know we have no visitors at present, and it will be such a pleasure to have him lunch with me; he seldom does, and never at all if there are visitors. But really, Miss Rosewarne, it is so inconsiderate of me to talk always of him, as if you were as much interested as myself. Why, the whole morning we have not said

a word about you and all you are looking forward to. I do hope you will be happy. I am sure you will be, for you have such a sensible way of regarding things, and all is sure to go well. I must say that I thought Harry was a little more mad than usual when he first told me about that money; but now I know you, I am very, very glad indeed, and very pleased that I could be of some little service to Mr. Roscorla for your sake."

The girl beside her did not understand; she looked up with wondering eyes.

"What money, Mrs. Trelyon?"

"I mean the money that Harry got for Mr. Roscorla—the money, you know, for these Jamaica estates; is it possible Mr. Roscorla did not tell you before he left?"

"I don't know anything about it, Mrs. Trelyon, and I hope you will tell me at once," Wenna said, with some decision

in her tone, but with a strange sinking at her heart.

“You don’t know, then?” Mrs. Trelyon said, with a sudden fear that she had been indiscreet. “Oh, it is nothing, a mere business arrangement. Of course, gentlemen don’t care to have these things talked over. I hope you won’t mention it, dear Miss Rosewarne; I really thought you might have overheard them speaking of the matter.”

Wenna said nothing. The soft dark eyes looked a little troubled, but that was all. And presently, up came young Trelyon, full of good spirits, and noise, and bustle; and he drove his mother and Wenna before him into the house; and hurried up the servants, and would open the wine himself. His mother checked him for whistling at luncheon; his reply was to toss the leg of a fowl on to the hearthrug, where a small and shaggy ter-

rier immediately began to worry it. He put the Angola cat on the table to see if it would eat some Cornish cream off his plate. His pigeons got to know of his being in the house, and came flying about the windows and walking jerkingly over the lawn; he threw up the windows and flung them a couple of handfuls of crumbs.

"Oh, Miss Wenna," said he, "would you like to see my tame fox? I am sure you would. Mather, you cut round to the stables and tell old Luke to bring that fox here—off you go—leave the claret this side."

"But I do not wish to see the fox; I particularly dislike foxes," said Wenna with some asperity; and Mather was recalled.

Master Harry grinned to himself; it was the first time he had been able to get her to speak to him. From the beginning of luncheon she had sat almost silent, observing his vagaries and listening to his random

talk in silence ; when she spoke it was always in answer to his mother. Very soon after luncheon she begged Mrs. Trelyon to excuse her going away ; and then she went and put on her hat.

“I’ll see you down to the inn,” said Master Harry, when she came out to the hall door.

“Thank you, it is quite unnecessary,” she said, somewhat coldly.

“Oh,” said he, “you may be as nasty as you please, but I shall conquer you by my extreme politeness.”

At another time she would have laughed at the notion of this young gentleman complimenting himself on his politeness ; now, as she walked quietly down the gravelled path to the gate, she was very grave, and, indeed, took no notice of his presence.

“Wenna,” said he, after he had shut the gate, and rejoined her, “is it fair to

make such a fuss about a chance word? I think you are very hard. I did not mean to offend you."

"You have not offended me, Mr. Trelyon."

"Then why do you look so—so uncomfortable?"

She made no answer.

"Now look here, do be reasonable. Are you vexed because I called you Wenna? Or is it because I spoke about singing in the choir?"

"No," she said, simply, "I was not thinking of anything of that kind; and I am not vexed."

"Then what is the matter?"

For another second or two she was silent, apparently from irresolution; then she suddenly stopped in the middle of the road, and confronted him. "Mr. Trelyon," she said, "is it true that you have given Mr. Roscorla money, and on my account?"


"No, it is not," he said, considerably startled by her tone; "I lent him some money—the money he wanted to take to Jamaica."

"And what business had you to do anything of the sort?" she said, with the shame in her heart lending a strangely unusual sharpness to her voice.

"Well," said the young man, quite humbly, "I thought it would be a service both to you and to him; and that there was no harm in it. If he succeeds he will pay me back. It was precious silly of him to tell you anything about it; but still, Miss Wenna—you must see—now don't be unreasonable—what harm could there be in it?"

She stood before him, her eyes cast down, her pale face a trifle flushed, and her hands clasped tight.

"How much was it?" she said in a low voice.



"Now, now, now," he said, in a soothing way, "don't you make a fuss about it; it is a business transaction; men often lend money to each other—what a fool he must have been to have—I beg your pardon——" and then he stopped, frowning at his own stupidity.

"How much was it?"

"Well, if you must know, five thousand pounds."

"Five thousand pounds!" she repeated absently. "I am sure my father has not so much money. But I will bid you good-bye now, Mr. Trelyon."

And she held out her hand.

"Mayn't I walk down with you to the village?" said he, looking rather crestfallen.

"No, thank you," she said quietly, and then she went away.

Well, he stood looking after her for a few seconds. Now that her back was turned to him and she was going away,

there was no longer any brightness in the fresh spring woods, nor any colour in the clear skies overhead. She had been hard on him, he felt ; and yet there was no anger or impatience in his heart, only a vague regret that somehow he had wounded her, and that they were no longer good friends. He stood so for a minute or two, and then he suddenly set out to overtake her. She turned slightly just as he had got up.

“Miss Wenna,” he said, rather shamefacedly, “I forgot to ask you whether you would mind calling in at Mrs. Luke’s as you go by. There is a basket of primroses there for you. I set the children to gather them about an hour ago ; I thought you would like them.”

She said she would ; and then he raised his cap to her—looked at her just for one moment—and turned and walked away. Wenna called for the basket, and a very fine basket of flowers it was, for Mrs. Luke

said that Master Harry had given the children sixpence apiece to gather the finest primroses they could get, and everyone knows what Cornish primroses are. Wenna took away the flowers, not paying any particular attention to them, and it was only when she got into her own room—and when she felt very much inclined to sit down and cry—that she noticed lying among the large and pale yellow primroses a bit of another flower which one of the children had, doubtless, placed there. It was merely a stalk of the small pink-flowered saxifrage, common in cottager's gardens, and called in some places London-pride. In other parts of the country they tenderly call it *None-so-pretty*.

CHAPTER III.

CONFIDENCES.

MEANWHILE, during the time that Wenna Rosewarne had been up at Trelyon Hall, her place in the inn had been occupied by a very handsome, self-willed, and gay-hearted young lady, who had endeavoured, after a somewhat wild fashion, to fulfil her sister's duties. She had gone singing through the house to see that the maids had put the rooms right; she had had a fight with Jennifer about certain jellies; she had petted her mother and teased her father into a good humour, after which she went outside in her smart print dress and bright ribbons, and sat down on the bench of black

oak at the door. She formed part of a pretty picture there; the bright April day was still shining all around, on the plashing water of the mill, on the pigeons standing on the roof, and on the hills beyond the harbour, which were yellow with masses of furze.

“And now,” said this young lady to herself, “the question is, can I become a villain? If I could only get one of the persons out of a story to tell me how they managed to do it successfully, how fine that would be! Here is the letter in my pocket—of course it has his address in it. I burn the letter. Wenna doesn’t write to him. He gets angry, and writes again and again. I burn each one as it comes; then he becomes indignant, and will write no more. He thinks she has forsaken him, and he uses naughty words, and pretends to be well rid of her. She is troubled and astonished for a time; then her pride is

touched, and she won't mention his name. In the end, of course, she marries a handsome young gentleman, who is really in love with her, and they are so very happy—oh, it is delightful to think of it! and then a long time after, the other one comes home, and they all find out the villain—that's me—but they are all quite pleased with the way it has ended, and they forgive me. How clever they are in stories to be able to do that!"

She took a letter out of her pocket, and furtively looked at it. It bore a foreign postmark. She glanced round to see that no one had observed her, and concealed it again.

"To burn this one is easy. But old Malachi mightn't always let me rummage his bag; and a single one getting into Wenna's hands would spoil the whole thing. Besides, if Wenna did not write out to Jamaica he would write home to

some of his friends—some of those nice, cautious, inquiring clergymen, no doubt, about the Hall—to let him know; and then there would be a pretty squabble. I never noticed how the villains in the stories managed that; I suppose there were no clever clergymen about, and no ill-tempered old postman like Malachi Lean. And oh! I should like to see what he says—he will make such beautiful speeches about absence, and trust, and all that; and he will throw himself on her mercy, and he will remind her of her engaged ring.”

Mabyn laughed to herself—a quiet, triumphant laugh. Whenever she was very down-hearted about her sister’s affairs, she used to look at the gipsy-ring of emeralds, and repeat to herself—

*Oh, green’s forsaken
And yellow’s forsworn;
And blue is the sweetest
Colour that’s worn!*

—and on this occasion she reflected that

perhaps, after all, it was scarcely worth while for her to become a villain in order to secure a result that had already been ordained by Fate.

“Mab,” said her father, coming out to interrupt her reflections, and speaking in a peevishly indolent voice; “where’s Wenna? I want her to write some letters and to go over to the Annots’. Of course your mother’s ill again, and can’t do anything.”

“Can’t I write the letters?” said Mabyn.

“You? you’re only fit to go capering about a dancing academy. I want Wenna.”

“Well, I think you might let her have one forenoon to herself,” Mabyn said, with some sharpness; “she doesn’t take many holidays. She’s always doing other people’s work, and when they’re quite able to do it for themselves.”

Mabyn’s father was quite insensible to

the sarcasm ; he said, in a complaining way—

“ Yes, that’s sure enough ; she’s always meddling in other people’s affairs, and they don’t thank her for it. And a nice thing she’s done with those Annots. Why, that young Hannabel fellow was quite content to mind his own bit of farm like any one else, until she put it into his head to get a spring-cart, and drive all the way down to Devonport with his poultry ; and now she’s led him on so that he buys up the fish, and the poultry, and eggs, and butter and things from all the folks about him, to sell at Devonport ; and of course they’re raising their prices, and they’ll scarcely deal with you except as a favour, they’ve got so precious independent. And now he’s come to the Tregear farm, and if Wenna doesn’t interfere, they’ll be contracting with him [for the whole of the summer. There’s one blessed mercy, when

she gets married she'll have to stop that nonsense, and have to mind her own business."

"Yes," said Mabyn, with some promptitude, "and she has been left to mind her own business pretty well of late."

"What's the matter with you, Mabyn?" her father carelessly asked, noticing at length the peculiarity of her tone.

"Why," she said, indignantly, "you and mother had no right to let her go and engage herself to that man. You ought to have interfered. She's not fit to act for herself—she let herself be coaxed over, and you'll be sorry for it some day."

"Hold your tongue, child," her father said, "and don't talk about things you can't understand. A lot of experience *you* have had! If Wenna didn't want to marry him, she could have said so; if she doesn't want to marry him now, she has only to say so. What harm can there be in that?"

“ Oh, yes ; it’s all very simple,” the girl said to herself, as she rose and went away ; “ very simple to say she can do what she pleases ; but she can’t, and she should never have been allowed to put herself in such a position, for she will find it out afterwards if she doesn’t now. It seems to me there is nobody at all who cares about Wenna except me ; and she thinks I am a child, and pays no heed to me.”

Wenna came in ; Mabyn heard her go upstairs to her own room, and followed her.

“ Oh, Wenna, who gave you this beautiful basket of primroses ? ” she cried, guessing instantly who had given them. “ It is such a pretty present to give to any one ! ”

“ Mrs. Luke’s children gathered them,” Wenna said coldly.

“ Oh, indeed ; where did the basket come from ? ”

“ Mr. Trelyon asked them to gather me

the primroses," Wenna said impatiently; "I suppose he got the basket."

"Then it is his present?" Mabyn cried. "Oh, how kind of him! And see, Wenna—don't you see what he has put in among the primroses? Look, Wenna—it is a bit of *None-so-pretty*. Oh, Wenna, that is a message to you!"

"Mabyn," her sister said, with a severity that was seldom in her voice, "you will make me vexed with you if you talk such nonsense. He would not dare to do such a thing—why, the absurdity of it! And I am not at all well-disposed towards Mr. Trelyon at this moment."

"I don't see why he shouldn't," said her sister humbly, and yet with a little inadvertent toss of the head; "everyone knows you are pretty except yourself, and there can be no harm in a young man telling you so. He is not a greater fool than anybody else. He has got eyes. He

knows that everyone is in love with you—everyone that is *now* in Eglosilyan, anyway. He is a very gentlemanly young man. He is a great friend to you. I don't see why you should treat him so."

Mabyn began to move about the room, as she generally did when she was a trifle excited and indignant, and inclined to tears.

"There is no one thinks so highly of you as he does. He is more respectful to you than to all the people in the world. I think it is very hard and unkind of you."

"But, Mabyn, what have I done?" her sister said.

"You won't believe he sent you that piece of *None-so-pretty*. You won't take the least notice of his friendliness to you. You said you were vexed with him."

"Well, I have reason to be vexed with him," Wenna said, and would willingly have left the matter there.

But her sister was not to be put off. She coaxed for a few minutes, then became petulant, and affected to be deeply hurt; then assumed an air of authority, and said that she insisted on being told. Then the whole truth came out. Mr. Trelyon had been lending to Mr. Roscorla a sum of money which he had no business to lend. Mr. Trelyon had somehow mixed her up with the matter, under the impression that he was conferring a service on her. Mr. Trelyon had concealed the whole transaction from her, and, of course, Mr. Roscorla was silent also. And on the face of it Mr. Trelyon was responsible for Mr. Roscorla going away from his native land to face all manner of perils, discomforts, and anxieties; for without that fatal sum of money he might still have been living in peace and contentment up at Basset Cottage.

“Well, Wenna,” said the younger sister

candidly, and with a resigned air, "I never knew you so unreasonable before. All you seem able to do is to invent reasons for disliking Mr. Trelyon, and I have no doubt you used him shamefully when you saw him this forenoon. You are all love and kindness to people who have no claim on you—to brats in cottages, and old women, but you are very hard on people who l—who respect you. And then," added Miss Mabyn, drawing herself up, "if I were to tell you how the story of that money strikes me, would it surprise you? Who asked Mr. Roscorla to have the money and to go away? Not Mr. Trelyon I am sure. Who concealed it? Whose place was it to come and tell you—you who are engaged to him? If it comes to that, I'll tell you what I believe, and that is, that Mr. Roscorla went and made use of the regard that Harry Trelyon has for you to get the money. There!"

Mabyn uttered the last words with an air which said, "*I will speak out this time, if I die for it.*" But the effect on her sister was strange. Of course, she expected Wenna to rise up indignantly and protest against her speaking of Mr. Roscorla in such a way. She was ready to brave her wrath. She fully thought they were entering on the deadliest quarrel that had ever occurred between them.

But whether it was that Wenna was too much grieved to care what her sister said, or whether it was that these frank accusations touched some secret consciousness in her own heart, the elder sister remained strangely silent, her eyes cast down. Mabyn looked at her, wondering why she did not get up in a rage: Wenna was stealthily crying. And then, of course, the younger sister's arms were round her in a minute, and there was a great deal of soothing and tender phrases; and finally

Mabyn, not knowing otherwise how to atone for her indiscretion, pulled out Mr. Roscorla's letter, put it in Wenna's hand, and went away.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FIRST MESSAGE HOME.


WENNA was glad to have the letter at that moment. She had been distracted by all this affair of the money; she had been troubled and angry—with whom she could scarcely tell; but here was something that recalled her to a sense of her duty. She opened it, resolved to accept its counsels and commands with all due meekness. For such kindness as he might choose to show, she would be grateful, and she would go back to her ordinary work more composed and cheerful, knowing that, whatever business affairs Mr. Roscorla might transact, her concern was only to remain loyal

to the promises she had made, and to the trust which he reposed in her.

And the letter was in reality a kind and friendly letter, written with a sort of good humour that did not wholly conceal a certain pathetic consciousness of distance and loneliness. It gave her a brief description of the voyage; of the look of the place at which he landed; of his meeting with his friends; and then of the manner in which he would have to spend his time while he remained in the island.

“My head is rather in a whirl as yet,” he wrote, “and I can’t sit down and look at the simple facts of the case—that every one knows how brief, and ordinary, and commonplace a thing a voyage from England to the West Indies is; and how, looking at a map, I should consider myself as only having run out here for a little trip. At present my memory is full of the long nights and of the early mornings, and of the

immeasurable seas that we were always leaving behind, so that now I feel as if England were away in some other planet altogether, that I should never return to. It seems years since I left you at Launceston Station; when I look back to it I look through long days and nights of water, and nothing but water, and it seems as if it must be years and years before I could see an English harbour again, all masts, and smoke, and hurry, with posters up on the walls, and cabs in the streets, and somewhere or other a railway-station where you know you can take your ticket for Cornwall, and get into your old ways again. But I am not going to give way to home-sickness; indeed, my dear Wenna, you need not fear that, for, from all I can make out, I shall have plenty to look after, and quite enough to keep me from mooning and dreaming. Of course I cannot tell you yet how things are likely to turn out, but the people I have




seen this morning are hopeful; and I am inclined to be hopeful myself, perhaps because the voyage has agreed with me very well, and has wonderfully improved my spirits. So I mean to set to work in good earnest, with the assurance that you are not indifferent to the results of it; and then some day, when we are both enjoying these, you won't be sorry that I went away from you for a time. Already I have been speculating on all that we might do if this venture turns out well, for of course there is no necessity why you should be mewed up in Eglosilyan all your life, instead of feeling the enjoyment of change of scene and of interests. These are castles in the air, you will say, but they naturally arise in the mind when you are in buoyant health and spirits; and I hope, if I return to England in the same mood, you will become infected with my confidence, and add some gaiety to the quiet serenity of your life."

Wenna rather hurried over this passage ; the notion that she might be enabled to play the part of a fine lady by means of the money which Harry Trelyon had lent to her betrothed was not grateful to her.

“I wish,” the letter continued, “that you had been looking less grave when you had your portrait taken. Many a time, on the voyage out, I used to fix my eyes on your portrait, and try to imagine I was looking at it in my own room at home, and that you were half a mile or so away from me, down at the inn in the valley. But these efforts were not successful, I must own ; for there was not much of the quiet of Eglosilyan around you when the men were tramping on the deck overhead, and the water hissing outside, and the engines throbbing. And when I used to take out your photograph on deck, in some quiet corner, I used to say to myself, ‘Now I shall see Wenna just as she is to-day, and I

shall know she has gone in to have a chat with the miller's children ; or she is reading out at the edge of Black Cliff ; or she is contentedly sewing in her little parlour.' Well, to tell you the truth, Wenna, I got vexed with your photograph ; I never did think it was very good—now I consider it bad. Why, I think of you as I have seen you running about the cliffs with Mabyn, or romping with small children at home, and I see your face all light and laughter, and your tongue just a little too ready to say saucy things when an old foggy like myself would have liked you to take care ; but here it is always the same face—sad, serious, and preoccupied. What were you thinking of when it was taken ? I suppose some of your *protégés* in the village had got into mischief."

"Wenna, are you here?" said her father, opening the door of her room.
"Why didn't Mabyn tell me ? And a nice



thing you've let us in for, by getting young Annot to start that business of going to Devonport. He's gone to Tregear now."

"I know," Wenna said, calmly.

"You know? And don't you know what an inconvenience it will be to us; for of course your mother can't look after these things, and she'll expect me to go and buy poultry and eggs for her."

"Oh no," Wenna said, "all that is arranged. I settled it both with the Annots and the Tregear folks six weeks ago. We are to have whatever we want just as hitherto, and Hannabel Annot will take the rest."

"I want you to write some letters," said Mr. Rosewarne, disappointed of his grumble.

"Very well," said Wenna; and she rose and followed her father.

They were met in the passage by Mabyn.

"Where are you going, Wenna?"

"She is going to write some letters for me," said her father, impatient of interference. "Get out of the way, Mab."

"Have you read that letter, Wenna? No, you haven't. Why, father, don't you know she's got a letter from Mr. Roscorla, and you haven't given her time to read it? She must go back instantly. Your letters can wait—or I'll write them. Come along, Wenna."

Wenna laughed, and stood uncertain. Her father frowned at first, but thought better of what he was about to say, and only remarked as he shrugged his shoulders and passed on—


"Some day or other, my young lady, I shall have to cuff your ears. Your temper is getting to be just a little too much for me, and as for the man who may marry you, God help him!"

Mabyn carried her sister back in triumph to her own room, went inside

with her, locked the door, and sat down by the window.

“I shall wait until you have finished,” she said ; and Wenna, who was a little surprised that Mabyn should have been so anxious about the reading of a letter from Mr. Roscorla, took out the document again, and opened it, and continued her perusal.

“And now, Wenna,” the letter ran, “I must finish ; for there are two gentlemen coming to call on me directly. Somehow I feel as I felt on sending you the first letter I ever sent you—that I have said nothing of what I should like to say. You might think me anxious, morbid, unreasonable, if I told you all the things that have occupied my mind of late with regard to you ; and yet sometimes a little restlessness creeps in that I can’t quite get rid of. It is through no want of trust in you, my dear Wenna—I know your sincerity and high principle too well for that.



To put the matter bluntly, I know you will keep faith with me; and that when I get back to England, in good luck or in ill luck, you will be there to meet me, and ready to share in whatever fate fortune may have brought us both. But sometimes, to tell you the truth, I begin to think of your isolated position; and of the possibility of your having doubts which you can't express to any one, and which I, being so far away from you, cannot attempt to remove. I know how the heart may be troubled in absence—mistaking its own sensations, and fancying that what is in reality a longing to see some one is the beginning of some vague dissatisfaction with the relations existing between you. Think of that, dear Wenna. If you are troubled or doubtful, put it down to the fact that I am not with you to give you courage and hope. A girl is indeed to be pitied at such a time: she hesitates to confess to herself that she

has doubts ; and she is ashamed to ask counsel from her relatives. Happily, however, you have multifarious duties which will in great measure keep you from brooding ; and I hope you will remember your promise to give me a full, true, and particular account of all that is happening in Eglosilyan. You can't tell how interesting the merest trifles will be to me. They will help me to make pictures of you and all your surroundings ; and already, at this great distance, I seem to feel the need of some such spur to the imagination. As I say, I cannot appeal to your portrait—there is no life in it ; but there is life in my mental portrait of you—life and happiness, and even the sound of your laughing. Tell me all about Mabyn, who I think is rather jealous of me, of your mother and father, and Jennifer, and everybody. Have you any people staying at the inn yet ; or only chance-comers ? Have the Trelyons

returned?—and has that wild schoolboy succeeded yet in riding his horse over a cliff?”

And so, with some few affectionate phrases, the letter ended.

“Well?” said Mabyn, coming back from the window.

“Yes, he is quite well,” Wenna said, with her eyes grown distant, as though she were looking at some of the scenes he had been describing.

“I did not ask if he was well,” Mabyn said. “I asked what you thought of the letter. Does he say anything about the borrowing of that money?”

“No, he does not.”

“Very well, then,” Mabyn said, sharply. “And you blame Mr. Trelyon for not telling you. Does a gentleman tell anybody when he lends money? No; but a gentleman might have told you that he had borrowed money from a friend of yours, who lent it

because of you. But there's nothing of that in the letter—of course not—only appeals to high moral principles, I suppose, and a sort of going down on his knees to you that you mayn't withdraw from a bargain he swindled you into——”

“Mabyn, I won't hear another word! This is really most insolent. You may say of me what you please; but it is most cruel—it is most unworthy of you, Mabyn—to say such things of any one who cannot defend himself. And I won't listen to them, Mabyn—let me say that once and for all.”

“Very well, Wenna,” the youngest sister said, with two big tears rising to her eyes, as she rose and went to the door. “You can quarrel with me if you please—but I've told you the truth—and there's those who love you too well to see you made unhappy; but I suppose I am to say nothing more——”


And she went ; and Wenna sat down by the window, thinking, with a sigh, that it seemed her fate to make everybody miserable. She sat there for a long time with the letter in her hand ; and sometimes she looked at it ; but did not care to read it over again. The knowledge that she had it was something of a relief ; she would use it as a talisman to dispel doubts and cares when these came into her mind ; but she would wait until the necessity arose. She had one long and argumentative letter to which she in secret resorted whenever she wished to have the assurance that her acceptance of Mr. Roscorla had been a right thing to do ; here was a letter which would exorcise all anxious surmises as to the future which might creep in upon her during the wakeful hours of the night. She would put them both carefully into her drawer, even as she put a bit of camphor there to keep away moths.

So she rose, with saddened eyes, and yet with something of a lighter heart; and in passing by the side-table she stopped—perhaps by inadvertence—to look at the basket of primroses which Harry Trelyon had sent her. She seemed surprised. Apparently missing something, she looked around and on the floor, to see that it had not fallen; and then she said to herself, “I suppose Mabyn has taken it for her hair.”

CHAPTER V.

TINTAGEL'S WALLS.

WHAT was the matter with Harry Trelyon? His mother could not make out, and there never had been much confidence between them, so that she did not care to ask. But she watched; and she saw that he had, for the time at least, forsaken his accustomed haunts and ways, and become gloomy, silent, and self-possessed. Dick was left neglected in the stables; you no longer heard his rapid clatter along the highway, with the not over-melodious voice of his master singing "The Men of merry, merry England" or "The Young Chevalier." The long and slender fishing-rod



remained on the pegs in the hall, although you could hear the flop of the small burn trout of an evening when the flies were thick over the stream. The dogs were deprived of their accustomed runs; the horses had to be taken out for exercise by the groom; and the various and innumerable animals about the place missed their doses of alternate petting and teasing, all because Master Harry had chosen to shut himself up in his study.

The mother of the young man very soon discovered that her son was not devoting his hours of seclusion in that extraordinary museum of natural history to making trout-flies, stuffing birds, and arranging pinned butterflies in cases, as was his custom. These were not the occupations which now kept Trelyon up half the night. When she went in of a morning, before he was up, she found that he had been covering whole sheets of paper with

careful copying out of passages taken at random from the volumes beside him. A Latin Grammar was ordinarily on the table—a book which the young gentleman had brought back from school pretty well free from thumb-marks. Occasionally a fencing foil lay among these evidences of study; while the small aquaria, the cases of stuffed animals with fancy backgrounds, and the numerous birdcages, had been thrust aside to give fair elbow-room. “Perhaps,” said Mrs. Trelyon to herself, with much satisfaction, “perhaps, after all, that good little girl has given him a hint about Parliament, and he is preparing himself.”

A few days of this seclusion, however, began to make the mother anxious; and so, one morning, she went into his room. He hastily turned over the sheet of paper on which he had been writing; then he looked up, not too well pleased.

“Harry, why do you stay indoors on

such a beautiful morning? It is quite like summer."

"Yes, I know," he said indifferently; "I suppose we shall soon have a batch of parsons here: summer always brings them. They come out with the hot weather—like bluebottles."

Mrs. Trelyon was disappointed; she thought Wenna Rosewarne had cured him of his insane dislike to clergymen—indeed, for many a day gone by he had kept respectfully silent on the subject.

"But we shall not ask them to come if you'd rather not," she said, wishing to do all she could to encourage the reformation of his ways. "I think Mr. Barnes promised to visit us early in May; but he is only one."

"And one is worse than a dozen. When there's a lot you can leave 'em to fight it out among themselves. But one—to have one stalking about an empty house, like a ghost dipped in ink! Why can't

you ask anybody but clergymen, mother? There are whole lots of people would like to run down to London for a fortnight before getting into the thick of the season—there's the Pomeroy girls as good as offered to come."

"But they can't come by themselves," Mrs. Trelyon said, with a feeble protest.

"Oh yes, they can; they're ugly enough to be safe anywhere. And why don't you get Juliott up? She'll be glad to get away from that old curmudgeon for a week. And you ought to ask the Trewhellas, mother and daughter, to dinner—that old fellow is not half a bad sort of fellow, although he's a clergyman."

"Harry," said his mother, interrupting him, "I'll fill the house, if that will please you; and you shall ask just whomsoever you please."

"All right," said he; "the place wants waking up."

“And then,” said the mother, wishing to be still more gracious, “you might ask Miss Rosewarne to dine with us—she might come well enough, although Mr. Roscorla is not here.”

A sort of gloom fell over the young man's face again.

“I can't ask her ; you may if you like.”

Mrs. Trelyon stared. “What's the matter, Harry ? Have you and she quarrelled ? Why, I was going to ask you, if you were down in the village to-day, to say that I should like to see her.”

“And how could I take such a message?” the young man said, rather warmly. “I don't see why the girl should be ordered up to see you as if you were conferring a favour on her by joining in this scheme. She's very hard-worked ; you have got plenty of time ; you ought to call on her, and study her convenience, instead of making her trot all the way up here whenever you want to talk to her.”

The pale and gentle woman was anxious not to give way to petulance just then.

“ Well, you are quite right, Harry ; it was thoughtless of me. I should like to go down and see her this morning ; but I have sent Jakes over to the blacksmith’s, and I am afraid of that new lad.”

“ Oh, I will drive you down to the inn ! I suppose among them they can put the horses to the waggonette,” the young man said ; and then Mrs. Trelyon went off to get ready.

It was a beautiful, fresh morning ; the far-off line of the sea still and blue ; the sunlight lighting up the wonderful masses of primroses along the tall banks ; the air sweet with the resinous odour of the gorse. Mrs. Trelyon looked with a gentle and childlike pleasure on all these things, and was fairly inclined to be very friendly with the young gentleman beside her. But he was more than ordinarily silent and morose.

He spoke scarcely a word to her as the carriage rolled along the silent highways. He drove rapidly and carelessly down the steep thoroughfare of Eglosilyan, although there were plenty of loose stones about. Then he pulled sharply up in front of the inn; and George Rosewarne appeared.

"Mr. Rosewarne, let me introduce you to my mother. She wants to see Miss Wenna for a few moments, if she is not engaged."

Mr. Rosewarne took off his cap, assisted Mrs. Trelyon to alight, and then showed her the way into the house.

"Won't you come in, Harry?" his mother said.

"No."

A man had come out to the horses' heads.

"You leave 'em alone," said the young gentleman. "I shan't get down."

Mabyn came out, her bright young face full of pleasure.

"How do you do, Mabyn?" he said, coldly, and without offering to shake hands.

"Won't you come in for a minute?" she said, rather surprised.

"No, thank you. Don't you stay out in the cold; you've got nothing round your neck."

Mabyn went away without saying a word, but thinking that the coolness of the air was much less apparent than that of his manner and speech.

Being at length left to himself, he turned his attention to the horses before him, and eventually, to pass the time, took out his pocket-handkerchief and began to polish the silver on the handle of the whip. He was disturbed in this peaceful occupation by a very timid voice, which said, "Mr. Trelyon."

He turned round and found that Wenna's wistful face was looking up to him,

with a look in it partly of friendly gladness, and partly of anxiety and entreaty.

"Mr. Trelyon," she said, with her eyes cast down, "I think you are offended with me. I am very sorry. I beg your forgiveness."

The reins were fastened up in a minute, and he was down in the road beside her.

"Now look here, Wenna," he said. "What could you mean by treating me so unfairly? I don't mean in being vexed with me; but in shunting me off, as it were, instead of having it out at once. I don't think it was fair."

"I am very sorry," she said. "I think I was very wrong; but you don't know what a girl feels about such things. Will you come into the inn?"

"And leave my horses? No," he said, good-naturedly. "But as soon as I get that fellow out, I will; so you go in at once, and I'll follow you directly. And mind, Wenna,

don't you be so silly again; or you and I may have a real quarrel. And I know that would break your heart."

The old pleased smile lit up her face again as she turned and went indoors; he, meanwhile, proceeded to summon an ostler by shouting his name at the pitch of his voice.

The small party of women assembled in the parlour were a trifle embarrassed; it was the first time that the great lady of the neighbourhood had honoured the inn with a visit. She herself was merely quiet, gentle, and pleased; but Mrs. Rosewarne, with her fine eyes and her sensitive face lit up and quickened by the novel excitement, was all anxiety to amuse, and interest, and propitiate her distinguished guest. Mabyn, too, was rather shy and embarrassed; she said things hastily, and then seemed afraid of her interference. Wenna was scarcely at her ease, because she saw that her mother

and sister were not; and she was very anxious, moreover, that these two should think well of Mrs. Trelyon and be disposed to like her.

The sudden appearance of a man, with a man's rough ways and loud voice, seemed to shake these feminine elements better together, and to clear the air of timid apprehensions and cautions. Harry Trelyon came into the room with quite a marked freshness and good-nature on his face. His mother was surprised: what had completely changed his manner in a couple of minutes?

"How are you, Mrs. Rosewarne?" he cried, in his off-hand fashion. "You oughtn't to be indoors on such a morning, or we'll never get you well, you know; and the doctor will be sending you to Penzance or Devonport for a change. Well, Mabyn, have you convinced anybody yet that your farm-labourers with their twelve shillings a week are better off than the slate-workers

with their eighteen? You'd better take your sister's opinion on that point, and don't squabble with me. Mother, what's the use of sitting here? You bring Miss Wenna with you into the waggonette, and talk to her there about all your business affairs, and I'll take you for a drive. Come along! And, of course, I want somebody with me: will you come, Mrs. Rosewarne, or will Mabyn? You can't?—then Mabyn must. Go along, Mabyn, and put your best hat on, and make yourself uncommonly smart, and you shall be allowed to sit next the driver—that's me!"

And indeed he bundled the whole of them about until they were seated in the waggonette just as he had indicated; and away they went from the inn-door.

"And you think you are coming back in half an hour?" he said to his companion, who was very pleased and very proud to occupy such a place. "Oh no, you're not.

You're a young and simple thing, Mabyn. These two behind us will go on talking now for any time about yards of calico, and crotchet-needles, and twopenny subscriptions; while you and I, don't you see, are quietly driving them over to Tintagel——"

"Oh, Mr. Trelyon!" said Mabyn.

"You keep quiet. That isn't the half of what's going to befall you. I shall put up the horses at the inn, and I shall take you all down to the beach for a scramble to improve your appetite; and at the said inn you shall have luncheon with me, if you're all very good and behave yourselves. Then we shall drive back just when we particularly please. Do you like the picture?"

"It is delightful—oh, I am sure Wenna will enjoy it?" Mabyn said. "But don't you think, Mr. Trelyon, that you might ask her to sit here? One sees better here than sitting sideways in a waggonette."

"They have their business affairs to settle."

“Yes,” said Mabyn, petulantly, “that is what every one says; nobody expects Wenna ever to have a moment’s enjoyment to herself! Oh! here is old Uncle Cornish—he’s a great friend of Wenna’s—he will be dreadfully hurt if she passes him without saying a word.”

“Then we must pull up and address Uncle Cornish. I believe he used to be the most thieving old ruffian of a poacher in this county.”

There was a hale old man, of seventy or so, seated on a low wall in front of one of the gardens; his face shaded from the sunlight by a broad hat; his lean grey hands employed in buckling up the leathern leggings that encased his spare calves. He got up when the horses stopped, and looked in rather a dazed fashion at the carriage.

“How do you do this morning, Mr. Cornish?” Wenna said.

“Why, now, to be sure!” the old man

said, as if reproaching his own imperfect vision. "'Tis a fine marnin, Miss Wenna, and yü be agwoin for a drive."

"And how is your daughter-in-law, Mr. Cornish? Has she sold the pig yet?"


"Naw, she hasn't sold the peg. If yü be agwoin thrü Trevalga, Miss Wenna, just yü stop and have a look at that peg; yü'll be mazed to see en; 'tis many a year agone sence there has been such a peg by me. And perhaps yü'd take the laste bit o' refreshment, Miss Wenna, as yü go by; Jane would get yü a coop o' tay to once."

"Thank you, Mr. Cornish, I'll look in and see the pig some other time; to-day we shan't be going as far as Trevalga."

"Oh, won't you?" said Master Harry, in a low voice, as he drove on. "You'll be in Trevalga before you know where you are."

Which was literally the case. Wenna was so much engaged in her talk with Mrs.

Trelyon that she did not notice how far away they were getting from Eglosilyan. But Mabyn and her companion knew. They were now on the high uplands by the coast, driving between the beautiful banks which were starred with primroses, and stitchwort, and red deadnettle, and a dozen other bright and tender-hued firstlings of the year. The sun was warm on the hedges and the fields, but a cool breeze blew about these lofty heights, and stirred Mabyn's splendid masses of hair as they drove rapidly along. Far over on their right, beyond the majestic wall of cliff, lay the great blue plain of the sea; and there stood the bold brown masses of the Sisters Rocks, with a circle of white foam around their base. As they looked down into the south, the white light was so fierce that they could but faintly discern objects through it; but here and there they caught a glimpse of a square church-tower, or of a few rude cottages clustered on the



high plain, and these seemed to be of a transparent grey in the blinding glare of the sun.

Then suddenly in front of them they found a deep chasm, with the white road leading down into its cool shadows. There was the channel of a stream, with the rocks looking purple amid the grey bushes; and here were rich meadows, with cattle standing deep in the grass and the daisies; and over there, on the other side, a strip of forest, with the sunlight shining along one side of the tall and dark green pines. As they drove down into this place, which is called the Rocky Valley, a magpie rose from one of the fields and flew up into the firs.

"That is sorrow," said Mabyn.

Another one rose and flew up to the same spot.

"And that is joy," she said, with her face brightening.

"Oh, but I saw another as we came to

the brow of the hill, and that means a marriage!" her companion remarked to her.

"Oh no!" she said, quite eagerly. "I am sure there was no third one. I am certain there were only two. I am quite positive we only saw two."

"But why should you be so anxious?" Trelyon said. "You know you ought to be looking forward to a marriage, and that is always a happy thing. Are you envious, Mabyn?"

The girl was silent for a moment or two. Then she said, with a sudden bitterness in her tone—

"Isn't it a fearful thing to have to be civil to people whom you hate? Isn't it?—when they come and establish a claim on you through some one you care for. You look at them—yes, you can look at them—and you've got to see them kiss some one that you love; and you wonder she doesn't

rush away for a bit of caustic and cauterize the place, as you do when a mad dog bites you."

"Mabyn," said the young man beside her, "you are a most unchristian sort of person this morning. Who is it whom you hate in such a fashion? Will you take the reins while I walk up the hill?"


Mabyn's little burst of passion still burned in her cheeks, and gave a proud and angry look to her mouth; but she took the reins all the same, and her companion leaped to the ground. The banks on each side of the road going up this hill were tall and steep; here and there great masses of wild flowers were scattered among the grass and the gorse. From time to time he stooped and picked up a handful; until, when they had got up to the high and level country again, he had brought together a very pretty bouquet of wild blossoms. When he got into his seat and took the reins

again, he carelessly gave the bouquet to Mabyn.

"Oh, how pretty!" she said; and then she turned round. "Wenna, are you very much engaged? Look at the pretty bouquet Mr. Trelyon has gathered for you."

Wenna's quiet face flushed with pleasure when she took the flowers; and Mrs. Trelyon looked pleased, and said they were very pretty. She evidently thought that her son was greatly improved in his manners when he condescended to gather flowers to present to a girl. Nay, was he not at this moment devoting a whole forenoon of his precious time to the unaccustomed task of taking ladies for a drive? Mrs. Trelyon regarded Wenna with a friendly look, and began to take a greater liking than ever to that sensitive and expressive face, and to the quiet and earnest eyes.

"But, Mr. Trelyon," said Wenna, look-



ing round, "hadn't we better turn? We shall be at Trevenna directly."

"Yes, you are quite right," said Master Harry; "you will be at Trevenna directly, and you are likely to be there for some time. For Mabyn and I have resolved to have luncheon there; and we are going down to Tintagel; and we shall most likely climb to King Arthur's Castle. Have you any objection?"


Wenna had none. The drive through the cool and bright day had braced up her spirits. She was glad to know that everything looked promising about this scheme of hers. So she willingly surrendered herself to the holiday; and in due time they drove into the odd and remote little village, and pulled up in front of the inn.

So soon as the ostler had come to the horses' heads, the young gentleman who had been driving jumped down and assisted his three companions to alight; then he

led the way into the inn. In the doorway stood a stranger—probably a commercial traveller—who, with his hands in his pockets, his legs apart, and a cigar in his mouth, had been visiting those three ladies with a very hearty stare as they got out of the carriage. Moreover, when they came to the doorway he did not budge an inch, nor did he take his cigar from his mouth; and so, as it had never been Mr. Trelyon's fashion to sidle past any one, that young gentleman made straight for the middle of the passage, keeping his shoulders very square. The consequence was a collision. The imperturbable person with his hands in his pockets was sent staggering against the wall, while his cigar dropped on the stone.

“What the devil——!” he was beginning to say, when Trelyon got the three women past him and into the small parlour: then he went back.

“Did you wish to speak to me, sir?”



No, you didn't—I perceive you are a prudent person. Next time ladies pass you, you'd better take your cigar out of your mouth, or somebody'll destroy that two pennyworth of tobacco for you. Good-morning."

Then he returned to the little parlour, to which a waitress had been summoned.

"Now, Jinny, pull yourself together and let's have something nice for luncheon—in an hour's time, sharp—you will, won't you? And how about that Sillery with the blue star—not the stuff with the gold head that some abandoned ruffian in Plymouth brews in his back garden. Well, now, can't you speak?"

"Yes, sir," said the bewildered maid.

"That's a good thing—a very good thing," said he, putting the shawls together on a sofa. "Don't you forget how to speak, until you get married. And don't let anybody come into this room. And you can

let my man have his dinner and a pint of beer—oh! I forgot, I'm my own man this morning, so you needn't go asking for him. Now, will you remember all these things?"

"Yes, sir; but what would you like for luncheon?"

"My good girl, we should like a thousand things for luncheon such as Tintagel never saw; but what you've got to do is to give us the nicest things you've got; do you see? I leave it entirely in your hands. Come along, young people."

And so he bundled his charges out again into the main street of the village; and somehow it happened that Mabyn addressed a timid remark to Mrs. Trelyon, and that Mrs. Trelyon, in answering it, stopped for a moment; so that Master Harry was sent to Wenna's side, and these two led the way down the wide thoroughfare. There were few people visible in the old-fashioned place; here and there an aged crone came out to

the door of one of the rude stone cottages to look at the strangers. Overhead the sky was veiled with a thin fleece of white cloud; but the light was intense for all that; and, indeed, the colours of the objects around seemed all the more clear and marked.

"Well, Miss Wenna," said the young man, gaily, "how long are we to remain good friends? What is the next fault you will have to find with me? Or have you discovered something wrong already?"

"Oh no!" she said, with a quiet smile, "I am very good friends with you this morning. You have pleased your mother very much by bringing her for this drive."

"Oh, nonsense!" he said. "She might have as many drives as she chose; but presently you'll find a lot o' those parsons back at the house, and she'll take to her white gowns again, and the playing of the organ all the day long, and all that sham stuff. I tell you what it is: she never

seems alive—she never seems to take any interest in anything—unless you're with her. Now you will see how the novelty of this luncheon-party in an inn will amuse her: but do you think she would care for it if she and I were here alone?"

"Perhaps you never tried?" Miss Wenna said gently.

"Perhaps I knew she wouldn't come. However, don't let's have a fight. I mean to be very civil to you to-day—I do, really."

"I am so much obliged to you," she said meekly. "But pray don't give yourself unnecessary trouble."

"Oh!" said he, "I'd always be civil to you if you would treat me decently. But you say far more rude things than I do—in that soft way, you know, that looks as if it were all silk and honey. I do think you've awfully little consideration for human failings. If one goes wrong in the least thing—even in one's spelling—you say some-

thing that sounds as pleasant as possible, and all the same it transfixes you just as you stick a pin through a beetle. You are very hard, you are—I mean with those who would like to be friends with you. When it's mere strangers, and cottagers, and people of that sort, who don't care a brass farthing about you, then I believe you're all gentleness and kindness; but to your real friends—the edge of a saw is smooth compared to you.”

“Am I so very harsh to my friends?” the young lady said, in a resigned way.

“Oh, well!” he said, with some compunction, “I don't quite say that; but you could be much more pleasant if you liked, and a little more charitable to their faults. You know there are some who would give a great deal to win your approval; and perhaps when you find fault they are so disappointed that they think your words are sharper than you mean; and sometimes

they think you might give them credit for trying to please you, at least."

"And who are these persons?" Wenna asked, with another smile stealing over her face.

"Oh!" said he, rather shamefacedly, "there's no need to explain anything to you. You always see it before one need put it in words."

Well, perhaps it was in his manner, or in the tone of his voice, that there was something which seemed at this moment to touch her deeply; for she half turned, and looked up at his face with her honest and earnest eyes, and said to him kindly—

"Yes, I do know without your telling me; and it makes me happy to hear you talk so; and if I am unjust to you, you must not think it intentional. And I shall try not to be so in the future."

Mrs. Trelyon was regarding with a kindly look the two young people walking

on in front of her. Whatever pleased her son pleased her; and she was glad to see him enjoy himself in so light-hearted a fashion. These two were chatting to each other in the friendliest manner; sometimes they stopped to pick up wild flowers; they were as two children together, under the fair and light summer skies.

They went down and along a narrow valley, until they suddenly stood in front of the sea, the green waters of which were breaking in upon a small and lonely creek. What strange light was this that fell from the white skies above, rendering all the objects around them sharp in outline and intense in colour? The beach before them seemed of a pale lilac, where the green waves broke in a semicircle of white. On their right some masses of ruddy rock jutted out into the cold sea, and there were huge black caverns into which the waves dashed and roared. On their left and far above

them towered a great and isolated rock, its precipitous sides scored here and there with twisted lines of red and yellow quartz; and on the summit of this bold headland, amid the dark green of the seagrass, they could see the dusky ruins—the crumbling walls, and doorways, and battlements—of the castle that is named in all the stories of King Arthur and his knights. The bridge across to the mainland has, in the course of centuries, fallen away; but there, on the other side of the wide chasm, were the ruins of the other portions of the castle, scarcely to be distinguished in parts from the grass-grown rocks. How long ago was it since Sir Tristram rode out here to the end of the world, to find the beautiful Isoulte awaiting him—she whom he had brought from Ireland as an unwilling bride to the old King Mark? And what of the joyous company of knights and ladies who once held high sport in the courtyard there?

Trelyon, looking shyly at his companion, could see that her eyes seemed centuries away from him. She was quite unconscious of his covertly staring at her; for she was absently looking at the high and bare precipices, the deserted slopes of dark sea-grass, and the lonely and crumbling ruins. She was wondering whether the ghosts of those vanished people ever came back to this desolate headland, where they would find the world scarcely altered since they had left it. Did they come at night, when the land was dark, and when there was a light over the sea only coming from the stars? If one were to come at night alone, and to sit down here by the shore, might not one see strange things far overhead, or hear some sound other than the falling of the waves?

“Miss Wenna,” he said — and she started suddenly — “are you bold enough to climb up to the castle? I know my mother would rather stay here.”

She went with him mechanically. She followed him up the rude steps cut in the steep slopes of slate, holding his hand where that was necessary; but her head was so full of dreams, that she answered him when he spoke only with a vague Yes or No. When they descended again, they found that Mabyn had taken Mrs. Trelyon down to the beach, and had inveigled her into entering a huge cavern, or rather a natural tunnel, that went right through underneath the promontory on which the castle is built. They were in a sort of green-hued twilight, a scent of seaweed filling the damp air, and their voices raising an echo in the great hall of rock.

"I hope the climbing has not made you giddy," Mrs. Trelyon said, in her kind way, to Wenna, noticing that she was very silent and *distracte*.

"Oh no!" Mabyn said promptly. "She has been seeing ghosts. We always know

when Wenna has been seeing ghosts. She remains so for hours."

And, indeed, at this time she was rather more reserved than usual all during their walk back to luncheon, and while they were in the inn ; and yet she was obviously very happy, and sometimes even amused by the childlike pleasure which Mrs. Trelyon seemed to obtain from these unwonted experiences.

"Come now, mother," Master Harry said, "what are you going to do for me when I come of age next month ? Fill the house with guests ?—yes, you promised that—with not more than one parson to the dozen. And when they are all feasting, and gabbling, and missing the targets with their arrows, you'll slip quietly away, and I'll drive you and Miss Wenna over here, and you'll go and get your feet wet again in that cavern, and you'll come up here again, and have an elegant luncheon, just like this. Won't that do ? "

"I don't quite know about the elegance of the luncheon; but I'm sure our little excursion has been very pleasant. Don't you think so, Miss Rosewarne?" Mrs. Trelyon said.

"Indeed I do," said Wenna, with her big, dark eyes coming back from their trance.

"And here is another thing," remarked young Trelyon. "There's a picture I've seen of the heir coming of age—he's a horrid, self-sufficient young cad, but never mind—and it seems to be a day of general jollification. Can't I give a present to somebody? Well, I'm going to give it to a young lady, who never cares for anything but what she can give away again to somebody else; and it is—well, it is—why don't you guess, Mabyn?"

"I don't know what you mean to give Wenna," said Mabyn, naturally.

"Why, you silly, I mean to give her a


dozen sewing-machines—a baker's dozen—thirteen—there! Oh! I heard you as you came along. It was all, '*Three sewing-machines will cost so much, and four sewing-machines will cost so much, and five sewing-machines will cost so much. And a penny a week from so many subscribers will be so much, and twopence a week from so many will be so much;*' and all this as if my mother could tell you how much twice two was. My arithmetic ain't very brilliant; but as for hers—— And these you shall have, Miss Wenna—one baker's dozen of sewing-machines, as per order, duly delivered, carriage free; empty casks and bottles to be returned."

"That is very kind of you, Mr. Trelyon," Wenna said—and all the dreams had gone straight out of her head so soon as this was mentioned—"but we can't possibly accept them. You know our scheme is to make the Sewing Club quite self-supporting—no charity."

“Oh, what stuff!” the young gentleman cried. “You know you will give all your labour and supervision for nothing— isn’t that charity? And you know you will let off all sorts of people owing you subscriptions the moment some blessed baby falls ill. And you know you won’t charge interest on all the outlay. But if you insist on paying me back for my sewing-machines out of the overwhelming profits at the end of next year, then I’ll take the money. I’m not proud.”

“Then we will take six sewing-machines from you, if you please, Mr. Trelyon, on those conditions,” said Wenna, gravely. And Master Harry—with a look towards Mabyn which was just about as good as a wink—consented.

As they drove quietly back again to Eglosilyan, Mabyn had taken her former place by the driver, and found him uncommonly thoughtful. He answered her



questions, but that was all ; and it was so unusual to find Harry Trelyon in this mood, that she said to him—

“ Mr. Trelyon, have you been seeing ghosts, too ? ”

He turned to her and said—

“ I was thinking about something. Look here, Mabyn ; did you ever know any one, or do you know any one, whose face is a sort of barometer to you ? Suppose that you see her look pale and tired, or sad in any way, then down go your spirits, and you almost wish you had never been born. When you see her face brighten up, and get full of healthy colour, you feel glad enough to burst out singing, or go mad ; anyhow, you know that everything's all right. What the weather is, what people may say about you, whatever else may happen to you, that's nothing : all you want to see is just that one person's face look perfectly bright and per-

fectly happy, and nothing can touch you then. Did you ever know anybody like that?" he added, rather abruptly.

"Oh yes!" said Mabyn, in a low voice; "that is when you are in love with some one. And there is only one face in all the world that I look to for all these things: there is only one person I know who tells you openly and simply in her face all that affects her: and that is our Wenna. I suppose you have noticed that, Mr. Trelyon?"

But he did not make any answer.

CHAPTER VI.

CONFESSION.

THE lad lay dreaming in the warm meadows, by the side of a small and rapid brook, the clear waters of which plashed and bubbled in the sunlight as they hurried past the brown stones. His fishing-rod lay near him, hidden in the long grass and the daisies. The sun was hot in the valley—shining on a wall of grey rock behind him, and throwing purple shadows over the clefts; shining on the dark bushes beside the stream, and on the lush green of the meadows; shining on the trees beyond, in the shadow of which some dark red cattle were standing. Then, away on the

other side of the valley rose gently-sloping woods, grey and green in the haze of the heat; and over these again was the pale blue sky with scarcely a cloud in it. It was a hot day to be found in spring-time; but the waters of the brook seemed cool and pleasant as they gurgled by, and occasionally a breath of wind blew from over the woods. For the rest, he lay so still on this fine, indolent, dreamy morning that the birds around seemed to take no note of his presence; and one of the large woodpeckers, with his scarlet head and green body brilliant in the sun, flew close by him and disappeared into the bushes opposite, like a sudden gleam of colour shot by a diamond.

“Next month,” he was thinking to himself, as he lay with his hands behind his head, not caring to shade his handsome and well-tanned face from the warm sun, “next month I shall be twenty-one,



and most folks will consider me a man. Anyhow, I don't know the man whom I wouldn't fight, or run, or ride, or shoot against, for any wager he liked. But of all the people who know anything about me, just that one whose opinion I care for will not consider me a man at all, but only a boy. And that without saying anything. You can tell, somehow, by a mere look what her feelings are; and you know that what she thinks is true. Of course it's true—I am only a boy. What's the good of me to anybody? I could look after a farm—that is, I could look after other people doing their work, but I couldn't do any myself. And that seems to me what she is always looking at—what's the good of you, what are you doing, what are you busy about? It's all very well for her to be busy, for she can do a hundred thousand things, and she is always at them. What can I do?"

Then his wandering day-dreamings took another turn.

“It was an odd thing for Mabyn to say, ‘*That is when you are in love with some one.*’ But those girls take everything for love. They don’t know how you can admire almost to worshipping the goodness of a woman, and how you are anxious that she should be well and happy, and how you would do anything in the world to please her, without fancying straight away that you are in love with her, and want to marry her, and drive about in the same carriage with her. I shall be quite as fond of Wenna Rosewarne when she is married ; although I shall hate that little brute with his rum and his treacle—the cheek of him, in asking her to marry him, is astonishing. He is the most hideous little beast that could have been picked out to marry any woman ; but I suppose he has appealed to her compas-

sion, and then she'll do anything. But if there was anybody else in love with her—if she cared the least bit about anybody else—wouldn't I go straight to her, and insist on her shunting that fellow aside! What claim has he on any other feeling of hers but her compassion? Why, if that fellow were to come and try to frighten her—and if I were in the affair, and if she appealed to me even by a look—then there would be short work with something or somebody?"

He got up hastily, with something of an angry look on his face. He did not notice that he had startled all the birds around from out of the bushes. He picked up his rod and line in a morose fashion, not seeming to care about adding to the half-dozen small and red-speckled trout he had in his basket.


While he was thus irresolutely standing, he caught sight of a girl's figure coming

rapidly along the valley, under the shadow of some ash-trees growing by the stream. It was Wenna Rosewarne herself, and she seemed to be hurrying towards him. She was carrying some black object in her arms.

“Oh, Mr. Trelyon!” she said, “what am I to do with this little dog? I saw him kicking in the road and foaming at the mouth—and then he got up and ran—and I took him——”

Before she had time to say anything more the young man made a sudden dive at the dog, caught hold of him, and turned and heaved him into the stream. He fell into a little pool of clear brown water; he spluttered and paddled there for a second; then he got his footing and scrambled across the stones up to the opposite bank, where he began shaking the water from his coat among the long grass.

“Oh, how could you be so disgracefully cruel!” she said, with her face full of indignation.



“And how could you be so imprudent?” he said, quite as vehemently. “Why, whose is the dog?”

“I don’t know.”

“And you catch up some mongrel little cur in the middle of the highway—he might have been mad——”

“I knew he wasn’t mad!” she said; “it was only a fit; and how could you be so cruel as to throw him into the river?”

“Oh!” said the young man, coolly, “a dash of cold water is the best thing for a dog when it has a fit. Besides, I don’t care what he had, or what I did with him, so long as you are safe. Your little finger is of more consequence than the necks of all the curs in the country.”

“Oh! it is mean of you to say that,” she retorted, warmly. “You have no pity for those wretched little things that are at every one’s mercy. If it were a handsome

and beautiful dog, now, you would care for that; or if it were a dog that was skilled in getting game for you, you would care for that."

"Yes, certainly," he said; "these are dogs that have something to recommend them."

"Yes, and every one is good to them; they are not in need of your favour. But you don't think of the wretched little brutes that have nothing to recommend them—that only live on sufferance—that every one kicks, and despises, and starves."

"Well," said he, with some compunction, "look there! That new friend of yours—he's no great beauty, you must confess—is all right now. The bath has cured him. As soon as he's done licking his paws, he'll be off home, wherever that may be. But I've always noticed that about you, Wenna—you're always on the side of things that are ugly, and helpless, and useless in the

world; and you're not very just to those who don't agree with you. For after all, you know, one wants time to acquire that notion of yours—that it is only weak and ill-favoured creatures that are worthy of any consideration."

"Yes," she said, rather sadly; "you want time to learn that."

He looked at her. Did she mean that her sympathy with those who were weak and ill-favoured arose from some strange consciousness that she herself was both? His cheeks began to burn red. He had often heard her hint something like that; and yet he had never dared to reason with her, or show her what he thought of her. Should he do so now?

"Wenna," he said, blushing hotly, "I can't make you out sometimes. You speak as if no one cared for you. Now, if I were to tell you——"

"Oh, I am not so ungrateful," she said

hastily. "I know that two or three do—and—and, Mr. Trelyon, do you think you could coax that little dog over the stream again? You see he has come back again—he can't find his way home."

Mr. Trelyon called to the dog; it came down to the river's side, and whined and shivered on the brink. "Do you care a brass farthing about the little beast?" he said to Wenna.

"I must put him on his way home," she answered.

Thereupon the young man went straight through the stream to the other side, jumping the deeper portions of the channel; he caught up the dog, and brought it back to her; and when she was very angry with him for this mad performance, he merely kicked some of the water out of his trousers, and laughed. Then a smile broke over her face also.

"Is that an example of what people

would do for me?" she said, shyly. "Mr. Trelyon, you must keep walking through the warm grass till your feet are dry; or will you come along to the inn, and I shall get you some shoes and stockings? Pray do; and at once. I am rather in a hurry."

"I'll go along with you, anyway," he said, "and put this little brute into the highway. But why are you in a hurry?"

"Because," said Wenna, as they set out to walk down the valley, "because my mother and I are going to Penzance the day after to-morrow, and I have a lot of things to get ready."

"To Penzance?" said he, with a sudden falling of the face.

"Yes. She has been dreadfully out of sorts lately, and she has sunk into a kind of despondent state. The doctor says she must have a change—a holiday, really, to take her away from the cares of the house——"

“Why, Wenna, it’s you who want the holiday; it’s you who have the cares of the house!” Trelyon said, warmly.

“And so I have persuaded her to go to Penzance for a week or two, and I go with her to look after her. Mr. Trelyon, would you be kind enough to keep Rock for me until we come back: I am afraid of the servants neglecting him?”

“You needn’t be afraid of that: he’s not one of the ill-favoured; every one will attend to him,” said Trelyon; and then he added, after a minute or two of silence, “The fact is, I think I shall be at Penzance also while you are there. My Cousin Juliott is coming here in about a fortnight, to celebrate the important event of my coming of age, and I promised to go for her. I might as well go now.”

She said nothing.

“I might as well go any time,” he said, rather impatiently. “I haven’t got any-

thing to do. Do you know, before you came along just now, I was thinking what a very useful person you were in the world, and what a very useless person I was—about as useless as this little cur. I think somebody should take me up and heave me into a river. And I was wondering, too,”—here he became a little more embarrassed and slow of speech—“I was wondering what you would say if I spoke to you, and gave you a hint that sometimes—that sometimes one might wish to cut this lazy life if one only knew how, and whether so very busy a person as yourself mightn’t, don’t you see, give one some notion—some sort of hint, in fact——”

“Oh! but then, Mr. Trelyon,” she said, quite cheerfully, “you would think it very strange if I asked you to take any interest in the things that keep me busy. That is not a man’s work. I wouldn’t accept you as a pupil.”

He burst out laughing.

“Why,” said he, “do you think I offered to mend stockings, and set sums on slates, and coddle babies?”

“As for setting sums on slates,” she remarked, with a quiet impertinence, “the working of them out might be of use to you.”

“Yes, and a serious trouble, too,” he said candidly. “No, no—that cottage business ain’t in my line. I like to have a joke with the old folks, or a romp with the children; but I can’t go in for cutting out pinafores. I shall leave my mother to do my share of that for me; and hasn’t she come out strong lately, eh? It’s quite a new amusement for her, and it’s driven a deal of that organ-grinding stuff out of her head; and I’ve a notion some of those parsons——”

He stopped short, remembering who his companion was; and at this moment they

came to a gate which opened out on the highway, through which the small cur was passed to find his way home.

“Now, Miss Wenna,”—said the young man—“by the way, you see how I remember to address you respectfully ever since you got sulky with me about it the other day?”

“I am sure I did not get sulky with you, and especially about that,” she remarked, with much composure. “I suppose you are not aware that you have dropped the ‘Miss’ several times this morning already?”

“Did I, really? Well, then, I’m awfully sorry—but then you are so good-natured you tempt one to forget; and my mother she always calls you Wenna Rosewarne now in speaking to me, as if you were a little school-girl instead of being the chief support and pillar of all the public affairs of Eglosilyan. And now, Miss Wenna, I shan’t go down the road with you, because

my damp boots and garments would gather the dust ; but perhaps you wouldn't mind stopping two seconds here, and I'm going to go a cracker and ask you a question : What should a fellow in my position try to do ? You see, I haven't had the least training for any one of the professions, even if I had any sort of capacity——"

"But why should you wish to have a profession ?" she said, simply. "You have more money than is good for you already."

"Then you don't think it ignominious," he said, with his face lighting up considerably, "to fish in summer, and shoot in autumn, and hunt in winter, and make that the only business of one's life ?"

"I should, if it were the only business ; but it needn't be, and you don't make it so. My father speaks very highly of the way you look after your property ; and he knows what attending to an estate is. And then, you have so many opportunities of being

kind and useful to the people about you, that you might do more good that way than by working night and day at a profession. Then you owe much to yourself; because if every one began with himself, and educated himself and became satisfied and happy with doing his best, there would be no bad conduct and wretchedness to call for interference. I don't see why you should be ashamed of shooting, and hunting, and all that; and doing them as well as anybody else, or far better, as I hear people say. I don't think a man is bound to have ambition and try to become famous; you might be of much greater use in the world even in such a little place as Eglosilyan than if you were in Parliament. I did say to Mrs. Trelyon that I should like to see you in Parliament, because one has a natural pride in any one that one admires and likes very much——”

He saw the quick look of fear that

sprang to her eyes—not a sudden appearance of shy embarrassment, but of absolute fear; and he was almost as startled by her blunder as she herself was. He hastily came to her rescue. He thanked her in a few rapid and formal words for her patience and advice; and, as he saw she was trying to turn away and hide the mortification visible on her face, he shook hands with her, and let her go.

Then he turned. He had been startled, it is true, and grieved to see the pain her chance words had caused her. But now a great glow of delight rose up within him; and he could have called aloud to the blue skies and the silent woods because of the joy that filled his heart. They were chance words, of course. They were uttered with no deliberate intention; on the contrary, her quick look of pain showed how bitterly she regretted the blunder. Moreover, he congratulated himself on his rapid piece of

acting, and assured himself that she would believe that he had not noticed that admission of hers. They were idle words. She would forget them. The incident, so far as she was concerned, was gone.

But not so far as he was concerned. For now he knew that the person whom, above all other persons in the world, he was most desirous to please, whose respect and esteem he was most anxious to obtain, had not only condoned much of his idleness, out of the abundant charity of her heart, but had further, and by chance, revealed to him that she gave him some little share of that affection which she seemed to shed generously and indiscriminately on so many folks and things around her. He, too, was now in the charmed circle. He walked with a new pride through the warm, green meadows, his rod over his shoulder; he whistled as he went, or he sang snatches of "The Rose of Allandale." He met

two small boys out bird's-nesting; he gave them a shilling apiece, and then inconsistently informed them that if he caught them, then or at any other time, with a bird's nest in their hands, he would cuff their ears. Then he walked hastily home, put by his fishing-rod, and shut himself up in his study with half a dozen of those learned volumes which he had brought back unsoiled from school.

CHAPTER VII.

ON WINGS OF HOPE.

WHEN Trelyon arrived late one evening at Penzance, he was surprised to find his uncle's coachman awaiting him at the station.

"What's the matter, Tobias? Is the old gentleman going to die? You don't mean to say you are here for me?"

"Yaäs, zor, I be," said the little old man, with no great courtesy.

"Then he is going to die, if he sends out his horse at this time o' night. Look here, Tobias; I'll put my portmanteau inside and come on the box to have a talk with you—you're such a jolly old card, you know—and you'll tell me all that's hap-

pened since I last enjoyed my uncle's bountiful hospitality."

This the young man did; and then the brown-faced, wiry, and surly little person, having started his horse, proceeded to tell his story in a series of grumbling and disconnected sentences. He was not nearly so taciturn as he looked.

"The maäster he went sün to bed to-night—'twere Miss Juliott sent me to the station, without tellin' en. He's gettin' worse and worse, that's süre; if yü be for giving me half-a-crown, like, or any one that comes to the house, he finds it out and stops it out o' my wages; yes, he does, zor, the old fule."

"Tobias, be a little more respectful to my uncle, if you please."

"Why, zor, yü knaw en well enough!" said the man, in the same surly fashion.

"And I'll tell yü this, Maäster Harry, if yü be after dinner with en, and he has a

bottle o' poort wine that he puts on the mantelpiece, and he says to yü to let that aloän, vor 'tis a medicine-zart o' wine, don't yü heed en, but have that wine. 'Tis the real old poort wine, zor, that yür vather gied en; the dahmned old Pagan!"

The young man burst out laughing, instead of reprimanding Tobias, who maintained his sulky impassiveness of face.

"Why, zor, I be gardener now, too; yaäs, I be, to save the wages. And he's gone clean mazed about that garden; yes, I think. Would yü believe this, Maäster Harry, that he killed every one o' the blessed strawberries last year with a lot o' wrack from the bache, because he said it wüd be as good for them as for the 'sparagus.?"


"Well, but the old chap finds amusement in pottering about the garden——"

"The old fule," repeated Tobias, in an undertone.

“And the theory is sound about the seaweed and the strawberries; just as his old notion of getting a green rose was by pouring sulphate of copper in at the roots.”

“Yaäs, that were another pretty thing, Maäster Harry, and he had the tin labels all printed out in French, and he waited and waited, and there baint a fairly güde rose left in the garden. And his violet glass for the cücumbers—he burned en up to once, although ’twere fine to hear ’n talk about the sunlight and the rays, and such nonsenses. He be a strange mahn, zor, and a dahmned close ’n with his penny pieces, Christian and all as he calls hissen. There’s Miss Juliott, zor, she’s goin to get married, I suppose; and when she goes, no one ’ll dare speak to ’n. Be yü going to stop long this time, Maäster Harry?”

“Not at the Hollies, Tobias. I shall go down to the Queen’s to-morrow; I’ve got rooms there.”



"So much the better; so much the better," said the frank but inhospitable retainer; and presently the jog-trot old animal between the shafts was pulled up in front of a certain square old-fashioned building of grey stone, which was prettily surrounded with trees. They had arrived at the Rev. Mr. Penaluna's house; and there was a young lady standing in the light of the hall, she having opened the door very softly as she heard the carriage drive up.

"So here you are, Harry; and you'll stay with us the whole fortnight, won't you? Come in to the dining-room—I have some supper ready for you. Papa's gone to bed, and he desired me to give you his excuses, and he hopes you'll make yourself quite at home, as you always do, Harry."

He did make himself quite at home; for, having kissed his cousin, and flung his top-coat down in the hall, he went into the

dining-room, and took possession of an easy chair.

"Shan't have any supper, Jue, thank you. You won't mind my lighting a cigar—somebody's been smoking here already. And what's the least poisonous claret you've got?"

"Well, I declare!" she said; but she got him the wine all the same, and watched him light his cigar; then she took the easy chair opposite.

"Tell us about your young man, Jue," he said. "Girls always like to talk about that."

"Do they?" she said. "Not to boys."

"I shall be twenty-one in a fortnight. I am thinking of getting married."

"So I hear," she remarked, quietly.

Now, he had been talking nonsense at random—mostly intent on getting his cigar well lit; but this little observation rather startled him.

"What have you heard?" he said, abruptly.

"Oh! nothing—the ordinary stupid gossip," she said, though she was watching him rather closely. "Are you going to stay with us for the next fortnight?"

"No; I have got rooms at the Queen's."

"I thought so. One might have expected you, however, to stay with your relations when you came to Penzance."

"Oh, that's all gammon, Jue!" he said; "you know very well your father doesn't care to have any one stay with you—it's too much bother. You'll have quite enough of me while I am in Penzance."

"Shall we have anything of you?" she said, with apparent indifference. "I understood that Miss Rosewarne and her mamma had already come here."

"And what if they have?" he said, with unnecessary fierceness.

"Well, Harry," she said, "you needn't

get into a temper about it; but people will talk, you know; and they say that your attentions to that young lady are rather marked considering that she is engaged to be married; and you have induced your mother to make a pet of her. Shall I go on?"

"No, you needn't," he said, with a strong effort to overcome his anger. "You're quite right—people do talk; but they wouldn't talk so much if other people didn't carry tales. Why, it isn't like you, Jue. I thought you were another sort. And about this girl of all girls in the world——"

He got up and began walking about the room, and talking with considerable vehemence, but no more in anger. He would tell her what cause there was for this silly gossip. He would tell her who this girl was who had been lightly mentioned. And in his blunt, frank, matter-of-fact way, which did not quite conceal his emotion, he

revealed to his cousin all that he thought of Wenna Rosewarne, and what he hoped for her in the future, and what their present relations were, and then plainly asked her if she could condemn him. Miss Juliott was touched.

“Sit down, Harry; I have wanted to talk to you, and I don’t mean to heed any gossip. Sit down, please—you frighten me by walking up and down like that. Now I’m going to talk common sense to you, for I should like to be your friend; and your mother is so easily led away by any sort of sentiment that she isn’t likely to have seen with my eyes. Suppose that this Miss Rosewarne——”

“No; hold hard a bit, Jue,” he said, imperatively. “You may talk till the millennium, but just keep off her, I warn you.”

“Will you hear me out, you silly boy? Suppose that Miss Rosewarne is everything

that you believe her to be. I'm going to grant that, because I'm going to ask you a question. You can't have such an opinion of any girl, and be constantly in her society, and go following her about like this, without falling in love with her. Now, in that case, would you propose to marry her?"

"I marry her!" he said, his face becoming suddenly pale for a moment. "Jue, you are mad. I am not fit to marry a girl like that. You don't know her. Why——"

"Let all that alone," Harry; when a man is in love with a woman he always thinks he's good enough for her; and whether he does or not he tries to get her for a wife. Don't let us discuss your comparative merits—one might even put in a word for you. But suppose you drifted into being in love with her—and I consider that quite probable—and suppose you forgot, as I know you would forget, the difference in

your social position, how would you like to go and ask her to break her promise to the gentleman to whom she is engaged ? ”

Master Harry laughed aloud, in a somewhat nervous fashion.

“ Him ? Look here, Jue ; leave me out of it—I haven’t the cheek to talk of myself in that connection ; but if there was a decent sort of fellow whom that girl really took a liking to, do you think he would let that elderly and elegant swell in Jamaica stand in his way ? He would be no such fool, I can tell you. He would consider the girl, first of all. He would say to himself, ‘ I mean to make this girl happy ; if any one interferes, let him look out ! ’ Why, Jue, you don’t suppose any man would be frightened by that sort of thing ! ”

Miss Juliott did not seem quite convinced by this burst of scornful oratory. She continued quietly—

“ You forget something, Harry. Your

heroic young man might find it easy to do something wild—to fight with that gentleman in the West Indies, or murder him, or anything like that, just as you see in a story ; but perhaps Miss Rosewarne might have something to say.”

“ I meant if she cared for him,” Trelyon said, looking down.


“ Granting that also, do you think it likely your hot-headed gentleman would be able to get a young lady to disgrace herself by breaking her plighted word, and deceiving a man who went away trusting in her ? You say she has a very tender conscience—that she is so anxious to consult every one’s happiness before her own—and all that. Probably it is true. I say nothing against her. But to bring the matter back to yourself—for I believe you’re hot-headed enough to do anything—what would you think of her if you or anybody else persuaded her to do such a treacherous thing ? ”

"She is not capable of treachery," he said, somewhat stiffly. "If you've got no more cheerful things to talk about, you'd better go to bed, Jue. I shall finish my cigar by myself."

"Very well, then, Harry. You know your room. Will you put out the lamp when you have lit your candle?"

So she went, and the young man was left alone, in no very enviable frame of mind. He sat and smoked, while the clock on the mantelpiece swung its gilded boy, and struck the hours and half-hours with unheeded regularity. He lit a second cigar, and a third; he forgot the wine; it seemed to him that he was looking on all the roads of life that lay before him, and they were lit up by as strange and new a light as that which was beginning to shine over the world outside. New fancies seemed to awake with the new dawn. For himself to ask Wenna Rosewarne to be his wife?—

could he but win the tender and shy regard of her eyes he would fall at her feet and bathe them with his tears! And if this wonderful thing were possible—if she could put her hand in his and trust to him for safety in all the coming years they might live together—what man of woman born would dare to interfere? There was a blue light coming in through the shutters. He went to the window—the topmost leaves of the trees were quivering in the cold air, far up there in the clearing skies, where the stars were fading out one by one. And he could hear the sound of the sea on the distant beach; and he knew that across the grey plain of waters the dawn was breaking, and that over the sleeping world another day was rising that seemed to him the first day of a new and tremulous life, full of joy, and courage, and hope.



CHAPTER VIII.

LOVE-MAKING AT LAND'S END.

“ARE you dreaming again, child?” said Mrs. Rosewarne to her daughter. “You are not a fit companion for a sick woman, who is herself dull enough. Why do you always look so sad when you look at the sea, Wenna?”

The wan-faced, beautiful-eyed woman lay on a sofa, a book beside her. She had been chatting in a bright, rapid, desultory fashion about the book and a dozen other things—amusing herself really by a continual stream of playful talk—until she perceived that the girl’s fancies were far away. Then she stopped suddenly, with

this expression of petulant but good-natured disappointment.

“Oh, I beg your pardon, mother,” said Wenna, who was seated at an open window fronting the bay. “What did you say? Why does the sea make one sad? I don’t know. One feels less at home here than out on the rocks at Eglosilyan; perhaps that is it. Or the place is so beautiful, that it almost makes you cry. I don’t know.”

And, indeed, Penzance Bay, on this still, clear morning, was beautiful enough to attract wistful eyes and call up vague and distant fancies. The cloudless sky was intensely dark in its blue; one had a notion that the unseen sun was overhead and shining vertically down. The still plain of water—so clear that the shingle could be seen through it a long way out—had no decisive colour; but the fishing-smacks lying out there were jet-black points in the bewildering glare. The sunlight did

not seem to be in the sky, in the air, or on the sea; but when you turned to the southern arm of the bay, where the low line of green hills runs out into the water, there you could see the strong clear light shining—shining on the green fields and on the sharp black lines of hedges, on that bit of grey old town with its cottage-gardens and its sea-wall, and on the line of dark rock that formed the point of the promontory. On the other side of the bay, the eye followed the curve of the level shore, until it caught sight of St. Michael's Mount rising palely from the water, its sunlit greys and purple shadows softened by the cool distance. Then beyond that again, on the verge of the far horizon, lay the long and narrow line of the Lizard, half lost in a silver haze. For the rest, a cool wind went this way and that through Mrs. Rosewarne's room, stirring the curtains. There was a fresh odour

of the sea in the air. It was a day for dreaming, perhaps; but not for the gloom begotten of languor and an indolent pulse.

“Oh, mother—oh, mother!” Wenna cried, suddenly, with a flush of colour in her cheeks. “Do you know who is coming along? Can you see? It is Mr. Trelyon, and he is looking at all the houses; I know he is looking for us.”

“Child, child!” said the mother. “How should Mr. Trelyon know we are here?”

“Because I told him,” Wenna replied, simply and hurriedly. “Mother, may I wave a handkerchief to him? Won’t you come and see him? he seems so much more manly in this strange place; and how brave and handsome he looks!”

“Wenna!” her mother said severely.

The girl did not wave a handkerchief, it is true; although she knelt down at the

open bay-window, so that he must needs see her; and sure enough he did. Off went his hat in a minute; a bright look of recognition leapt to his eyes, and he crossed the street. Then Wenna turned, all in a flutter of delight, and quite unconscious of the colour in her face.

“Are you vexed, mother? Mayn’t I be glad to see him? Why, when I know that he will brighten up your spirits better than a dozen doctors! One feels quite happy and hopeful whenever he comes into the room. Mother, you won’t have to complain of dulness if Mr. Trelyon comes to see you. And why doesn’t the girl send him up at once?”


Wenna was standing at the open door to receive him when he came up-stairs; she had wholly forgotten the embarrassment of their last parting.

“I thought I should find you out,” he said, when he came into the room, and it

was clear that there was little embarrassment about him ; “and I know how your mother likes to be teased and worried. You’ve got a nice place here, Mrs. Rosewarne ; and what splendid weather you’ve brought with you ! ”

“Yes,” said Wenna, her whole face lit up with a shy gladness, “haven’t we ? And did you ever see the bay looking more beautiful ? It is enough to make you laugh and clap your hands out of mere delight to see everything so lovely and fresh ! ”

“A few minutes ago I thought you were nearly crying over it,” said the mother, with a smile ; but Miss Wenna took no heed of the reproof. She would have Mr. Trelyon help himself to a tumbler of claret and water. She fetched out from some mysterious lodging-house recess an ornamented tin can of biscuits. She accused herself of being the dullest companion in the world, and indirectly hinted that he might have



pity on her mamma and stay to luncheon with them.

“Well, it’s very odd,” he said, telling a lie with great simplicity of purpose, “but I had arranged to drive to the Land’s End for luncheon—to the inn there, you know. I suppose it wouldn’t—do you think, Mrs. Rosewarne—would it be convenient for you to come for a drive so far?”

“Oh, it would be the very best thing in the world for her—nothing could be better,” said Wenna; and then she added meekly, “if it is not giving you too much trouble, Mr. Trelyon.”

He laughed.

“Trouble! I’m glad to be of use to anybody; and in this case I shall have all the pleasure on my side. Well, I’m off now to see about the horses. If I come for you in half-an-hour, will that do?”

As soon as he had left, Mrs. Rosewarne turned to her daughter, and said to her, gravely enough—

“Wenna, one has seldom to talk to you about the proprieties ; but, really, this seems just a little doubtful. Mr. Trelyon may make a friend of you ; that is all very well, for you are going to marry a friend of his. But you ought not to expect him to associate with me.”

“Mother,” said Wenna, with hot cheeks, “I wonder how you can suspect him of thinking of such foolish and wicked things. Why, he is the very last man in all the world to do anything that was mean and unkind, or to think about it.”

“My dear child, I suspect him of nothing,” Mrs. Rosewarne said ; “but look at the simple facts of the case. Mr. Trelyon is a very rich gentleman ; his family is an old one, greatly honoured about here ; and if he is so recklessly kind as to offer his acquaintanceship to persons who are altogether in a different sphere of life, we should take care not to abuse his kindness, or to

let people have occasion to wonder at him. Looking at your marriage and future station, it is perhaps more permissible with you; but as regards myself, I don't very much care, Wenna, to have Mr. Trelyon coming about the house."

"Why, mother, I—I am surprised at you!" Wenna said, warmly. "You judge of him by the contemptible things that other people might say of him. Do you think he would care for that? Mr. Trelyon is a man, and like a man he has the courage to choose such friends as he likes; and it is no more to him what money they have, or what their position is, than the—than the shape of their pocket-handkerchiefs is! Perhaps that is his folly—recklessness—the recklessness of a young man. Perhaps it is. I am not old enough to know how people alter; but I hope I shall never see Mr. Trelyon alter in this respect—never, if he were to live for a hundred years. And

—and I am surprised to hear you, of all people, mother, suggest such things of him. What has he done that you should think so meanly of him ? ”

Wenna was very indignant and hurt. She would have continued further, but that a tremulous movement of her under lip caused her to turn away her head.

“ Well, Wenna, you needn’t cry about it,” her mother said gently. “ It is of no great consequence. Of course every one must please himself in choosing his friends ; and I quite admit that Mr. Trelyon is not likely to be hindered by anything that anybody may say. Don’t take it so much to heart, child ; go and get on your things, and get back some of the cheerfulness you had while he was here. I will say that for the young man—that he has an extraordinary power of raising your spirits.”

“ You are a good mother after all,” said Wenna, penitently ; “ and if you come and

let me dress you prettily, I shall promise not to scold you again—not till the next time you deserve it.”

By the time they drove away from Penzance, the forenoon had softened into more beautiful colours. There was a paler blue in the sky and on the sea, and millions of yellow stars twinkled on the ripples. A faint haze had fallen over the bright green hills lying on the south of the bay.

“Life looks worth having on such a day as this,” Trelyon said; “doesn’t it, Miss Wenna?”


She certainly seemed pleased enough. She drank in the sweet fresh air; she called attention to the pure rare colours of the sea and the green uplands; the coolness of the woods through which they drove, the profuse abundance of wild flowers along the banks—all things around her seemed to have conspired to yield her delight; and a great happiness shone in her eyes. Mr. Trelyon

talked mostly to Mrs. Rosewarne; but his eyes rarely wandered away for long from Wenna's pleased and radiant face; and again and again he said to himself, "*And if a simple drive on a spring morning can give this child so great a delight, it is not the last that she and I shall have together.*"

"Mrs. Rosewarne," said he, "I think your daughter has as much need of a holiday as anybody. I don't believe there's a woman or girl in the county works as hard as she does."


"I don't know whether she needs it," said Miss Wenna, of herself, "but I know that she enjoys it."

"I know what you'd enjoy a good deal better than merely getting out of sight of your own door, for a week or two," said he. "Wouldn't you like to get clear away from England for six months, and go wandering about all sorts of fine places? Why, I could take you such a trip in that time!



I should like to see what you'd say to some of the old Dutch towns, and their churches, and all that; then Cologne, you know, and a sail up the Rhine to Mainz; then you'd go on to Basle and Geneva, and we'd get you a fine big carriage, with the horses decorated with foxes' and pheasants' tails, to drive you to Chamounix. Then, when you had gone tremulously over the Mer de Glace, and kept your wits about you going down the Mauvais Pas, I don't think you could do better than go on to the Italian lakes—you never saw anything like them, I'll be bound—and Naples, and Florence. Would you come back by the Tyrol, and have a turn at Zürich and Lucerne, with a ramble through the Black Forest in a trap resembling a ramshackle landau?"

"Thank you," said Wenna, very cheerfully. "The sketch is delightful; but I am pretty comfortable where I am."




“ But this can’t last,” said he.

“ And neither can my holidays,” she answered.

“ Oh, but they ought to,” he retorted vehemently. “ You have not half enough amusement in your life—that’s my opinion. You slave too much, for all those folks about Eglosilyan and their dozens of children. Why, you don’t get anything out of life as you ought to. What have you to look forward to? Only the same ceaseless round of working for other people. Don’t you think you might let some one else have a turn at that useful but monotonous occupation?”

“ But Wenna has something else to look forward to now,” her mother reminded him gently ; and after that he did not speak for some time.

Fair and blue was the sea that shone all around the land when they got out on the rough moorland near the coast. They



drove to the solitary little inn perched over the steep cliffs ; and here the horses were put up and luncheon ordered. Would Mrs. Rosewarne venture down to the great rocks at the promontory ? No, she would rather stay indoors till the young people returned ; and so these two went along the grassy path by themselves.

They clambered down the slopes, and went out among the huge blocks of weather-worn granite, many of which were brilliant with grey, green, and orange lichens. There was a low and thunderous noise in the air ; far below them, calm and fine as the day was, the summer sea dashed and roared into gigantic caverns, while the white foam floated out again on the troubled waves. Could anything have been more magical than the colours of the sea—its luminous greens, its rich purples, its brilliant blues, lying in long swathes on the apparently motionless surface ? It was

only the seething white beneath their feet, and the hoarse thunder along the coast, that told of the force of this summer-like sea ; for the rest the picture was light, and calm, and beautiful. Out there the black rocks basked in the sunlight, the big skarts standing on their ledges, not moving a feather. A small steamer was slowly making for the island further out, where a lighthouse stood. And far away beyond these, on the remote horizon, the Scilly Isles lay like a low bank of yellow fog, under the pale blue skies.

They were very much by themselves, out here at the end of the world ; and yet they did not seem inclined to talk much. Wenna sat down on the warm grass ; her companion perched himself on one of the blocks of granite ; they watched the great undulations of the blue water come rolling on to the black rocks, and then fall backward seething in foam.

"And what are you thinking about?" said Trelyon to her gently, so that she should not be startled.

"Of nothing at all—I am quite happy," Wenna said frankly. Then she added, "I suppose the worst of a day like this is, that a long time after you look back upon it, and it seems so beautiful and far away that it makes you miserable. You think how happy you were once. That is the unfortunate side of being happy."

"Well," said he, "I must say you don't look forward to the future with any great hope, if you think the recollection of one bright day will make you wretched."

He came down from his perch and stood beside her.

"Why, Wenna," said he, "do you know what you really need? Some one to take you in hand thoroughly, and give you such an abundance of cheerful and pleasant days that you would never think of singling out

any one of them. Why shouldn't you have weeks and months of happy idling, in bright weather, such as lots of people have, who don't deserve them a bit? There's something wrong in your position. You want some one to become your master, and compel you to make yourself happy. You won't of yourself study your own comfort; some one else ought to make you."

"And who do you think would care to take so much trouble about me?" she said, with a smile; for she attached no serious meaning to this random talk.

Her companion's face flushed somewhat, not with embarrassment, but with the courage of what he was going to say.

"I would," he said, boldly. "You will say it is none of my business; but I tell you I would give twenty thousand pounds to-morrow, if I were allowed to—to get you a whole summer of pleasant holidays."

There was something about the plain-

spoken honesty of this avowal that touched her keenly. Wild and impossible as the suggestion was, it told her at least what one person in the world thought of her. She said to him, with her eyes cast down :

“I like to hear you speak like that—not for my own sake—but I know there is nothing generous and kindly that you wouldn't do at a mere moment's impulse. But I hope you don't think I have been grumbling over my lot, on such a day as this? Oh no; I see too much of other people's ways of living to complain of my own. I have every reason to be contented and happy.”

“Yes, you're a deal too contented and happy,” said he, with an impatient shrug. “You want somebody to alter all that, and see that you get more to be contented and happy about.”

She rose; he gave her his hand to help her up. But he did not surrender her hand

then, for the path up the slopes was a steep and difficult one ; and she could fairly rely on his strength and sureness of foot.

"But you are not content, Mr. Trelyon," she said. "I always notice that, whenever you get to a dangerous place, you are never satisfied unless you are putting your life in peril. Wouldn't you like to ride your black horse down the face of this precipice ? Or wouldn't you like to clamber down blindfold ? Why does a man generally seem to be anxious to get rid of his life ? "

"Perhaps it isn't of much use to him," he said coolly.

"You ought not to say that," she answered, in a low voice.

"Well," he said, "I don't mean to break my neck yet awhile ; but if I did, who would miss me ? I suppose my mother would play half-a-dozen a day more operas or oratorios, or stuff of that sort, and there would be twenty parsons in the house for

one there is at present. And some of the brats about the place would miss an occasional sixpence—which would be better for their health. And Dick—I suppose they'd sell him to some fool of a Londoner, who would pound his knees out in the Park—he would miss me too."

"And these are all," she said, "who would miss you? You are kind to your friends."

"Why, would you?" he said, with a stare of surprise; and then, seeing she would not speak, he continued, with a laugh, "I like the notion of my making an object of general compassion of myself. Did the poor dear tumble off a rock into the sea? And where was its mother's apron-string? I'm not going to break my neck yet awhile, Miss Wenna; so don't you think I'm going to let you off your promise to pay me back for those sewing-machines."

"I have told you, Mr. Trelyon," she

said, with some dignity, "that we shall pay you back every farthing of the price of them."

He began to whistle in an impertinent manner. He clearly placed no great faith in the financial prospects of that Sewing Club.

They had some light luncheon in the remote little inn, and Mrs. Rosewarne was pleased to see her ordinarily demure and preoccupied daughter in such high and careless spirits. It was not a splendid banquet. Nor was the chamber a gorgeous one, for the absence of ornament and the enormous thickness of the walls told of the house being shut up in the winter months and abandoned to the fury of the western gales, when the wild sea came hurling up the face of these steep cliffs and blowing over the land. But they paid little attention to any lack of luxury. There was a beautiful blue sea shining in the distance:

the sunlight was falling hotly on the greensward of the rocks outside: and a fresh, cool breeze came blowing in at the open window. They let the time pass easily, with pleasant talk and laughter.

Then they drove leisurely back in the afternoon. They passed along the moorland ways, through rude little villages built of stone, and by the outskirts of level and cheerless farms, until they got into the beautiful woods and avenues lying around Penzance. When they came in sight of the broad bay, they found that the world had changed its colours since the morning. The sea was of a cold purplish grey; but all around it, on the eastern horizon, there was a band of pale pink in the sky. On the west again, behind Penzance, the warm hues of the sunset were shining behind the black stems of the trees. The broad thoroughfare was mostly in shadow; and the sea was so still that one could hear the footsteps and the voices

of the people walking up and down the Parade.

“I suppose I must go now,” said the young gentleman, when he had seen them safely seated in the small parlour overlooking the bay. But he did not seem anxious to go.

“But why go?” Wenna said, rather timidly. “You have no engagement, Mr. Trelyon. Would you care to stay and have dinner with us—such a dinner as we can give you?”

“Well, to tell you the truth, I should like it very much,” he said.

Mrs. Rosewarne, a little surprised, and yet glad to see Wenna enjoying herself, regarded the whole affair with a gentle resignation. Wenna had the gas lit, and the blinds let down; then, as the evening was rather cold, she had soon a bright fire burning in the grate. She helped to lay the table. She produced such wines as they had.

She made sundry visits to the kitchen ; and at length the banquet was ready.

What ailed the young man ? He seemed beside himself with careless and audacious mirth ; and he made Mrs. Rosewarne laugh as she had not laughed for years. It was in vain that Wenna assumed airs to rebuke his rudeness. Nothing was sacred from his impertinence—not even the offended majesty of her face. And at last she gave in too, and could only revenge herself by saying things of him which, the more severe they were, the more he seemed to enjoy. But after dinner she went to the small piano, while her mother took a big easy-chair near the fire ; and he sat by the table, apparently looking over some books. There was no more reckless laughter then.

In ancient times—that is to say, in the half-forgotten days of our youth—a species of song existed which exists no more. It was not as the mournful ballads of these

days, which seem to record the gloomy utterances of a strange young woman who has apparently wandered into the magic scene in "Der Freischütz," and who mixes up the moanings of her passion with descriptions of the sights and sounds she there finds around her. It was of quite another stamp. It dealt with a phraseology of sentiment peculiar to itself—a "patter," as it were, which came to be universally recognized in drawing-rooms. It spoke of maidens plighting their troth, of Phyllis enchanting her lover with her varied moods, of marble halls in which true love still remained the same. It apostrophized the shells of ocean; it tenderly described the three great crises of a particular heroine's life by mentioning successive head-dresses; it told of how the lover of Pretty Jane would have her meet him in the evening. Well, all the world was content to accept this conventional phrase-

ology ; and, behind the paraphernalia of "enchanted moonbeams," and "fondest glances," and "adoring sighs," perceived and loved the sentiment that could find no simpler utterance. Some of us, hearing the half-forgotten songs again, suddenly forget the odd language, and the old pathos springs up again, as fresh as in the days when our first love had just come home from her boarding-school ; while others, who have no old-standing acquaintance with these memorable songs, have somehow got attracted to them by the mere quaintness of their speech and the simplicity of their airs. Master Harry Trelyon was no great critic of music. When Wenna Rosewarne sang that night "She wore a wreath of roses," he fancied he had never listened to anything so pathetic. When she sang "Meet me by moonlight alone," he was delighted with the spirit and half-humorous, half-tender grace of the composition. As

she sang "When other lips and other hearts," it seemed to him that there were no songs like the old-fashioned songs, and that the people who wrote those ballads were more frank, and simple, and touching in their speech than writers now-a-days. Somehow, he began to think of the drawing-rooms of a former generation; and of the pictures of herself his grandmother had drawn for him many a time. Had she a high waist to that white silk dress in which she ran away to Gretna; and did she have ostrich feathers on her head? Anyhow, he entirely believed what she had told him of the men of that generation. They were capable of doing daring things for the sake of a sweetheart. Of course his grandfather had done boldly and well in whirling the girl off to the Scottish borders; for who could tell what might have befallen her among ill-natured relatives and persecuted suitors?

Wenna Rosewarne was singing "We


met; 'twas in a crowd; and I thought he would shun me." It is the song of a girl (must one explain so much in these later days?) who is in love with one man, and has been induced to marry another: she meets the former, and her heart is filled with shame, and anguish, and remorse. As Wenna sang the song, it seemed to this young man that there was an unusual pathos in her voice; and he was so carried away by the earnestness of her singing, that his heart swelled and rose up within him, and he felt himself ready to declare that such should not be her fate. This man who was coming back to marry her—was there no one ready to meet him and challenge his atrocious claim? Then the song ended; and, with a sudden disappointment, Trelyon recollected that he at least had no business to interfere. What right had he to think of saving her?

He had been idly turning over some

volumes on the table. At last he came to a Prayer-book, of considerable size and elegance of binding. Carelessly looking at the fly-leaf, he saw that it was a present to Wenna Rosewarne, "with the very dearest love of her sister Mabyn." He passed his hand over the leaves, not noticing what he was doing: suddenly he saw something which did effectually startle him into attention.

It was a sheet of paper with two slits cut into it at top and bottom. In these a carefully-pressed piece of None-so-pretty had been placed, and just underneath the flower was written in pencil "From H. T. to W. R., May 2nd, 18—." He shut the book quickly, as if his fingers had been burned; and then he sate quite silent, with his heart beating fast.

So she had kept the flower he had put in the basket of primroses. It had carried its message; and she still remained his friend.



CHAPTER IX.

THE CUT DIRECT.

"WELL, mother," Miss Wenna said deliberately, after he had gone, "I never did see you so thoroughly enjoy a whole day."

"I was thinking the same about you, Wenna," the mother answered, with an amused look.

"That is true enough, mother," the girl confessed, in her simple way. "He is so good-natured, so full of spirits, and careless, that one gets quite as careless and happy as himself. It is a great comfort, mother, to be with anybody who doesn't watch the meaning of every word you say—don't you think so? And I hope I wasn't rude—do you think I was rude?"

"Why, child, I don't think you could be rude to a fox that was eating your chickens. You would ask him to take a chair and not hurry himself."

"Well, I must write to Mabyn now," Wenna said, with a business-like air, "and thank her for posting me this Prayer-book. I suppose she didn't know I had my small one with me."

She took up the book, for she was sitting on the chair that Harry Trelyon had just vacated. She had no sooner done so than she caught sight of the sheet of paper with the dried flower and the inscription in Mabyn's handwriting. She stared, with something of a look of fear on her face.


"Mother," she said, in quite an altered voice, "did you notice if Mr. Trelyon was looking at this Prayer-book?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," Mrs. Rosewarne said. "I should think he went over every book on the table."

The girl said nothing; but she took the book in her hand and carried it up to her own room. She stood for a moment irresolute; then she took the sheet of paper with the flowers on it, and tore it in a hundred pieces, and threw them into the empty grate. Then she cried a little—as a girl must; and finally went down again and wrote a letter to Mabyn, which rather astonished that young lady.

“My dear Mabyn”—so the letter ran—
“I am exceedingly angry with you. I did not think you were capable of such folly—I might call it by a worse name if I thought you really meant what you seem to mean. I have just torn up the worthless scrap of flower you so carefully preserved for me into a thousand pieces; but you will be glad to know that in all probability Mr. Trelyon saw it on the paper, and the initials, too, which you put there. I cannot tell you how pained and angry I am. If he did place

that flower intentionally among the prim-roses, it was most impertinent of him; but he is often impertinent in joking. What must he think of me that I should seem to have taken this seriously, and treasured up that miserable and horrid piece of weed, and put his initials below it, and the important date? You put thoughts into my head that cover me with shame. I should not be fit to live if I were what you take me to be. If I thought there was another human being in the world who could imagine or suspect what you apparently desire, I would resolve this moment never to see Mr. Trelyon again; and much harm that would do either him or me! But I am too proud to think that any one could imagine such a thing. Nor did I expect that to come from my own sister, who ought to know what my true relations are with regard to Mr. Trelyon. I like him very much, as I told him to his face two



days before we left Eglosilyan, *and that will show you what our relations are.* I think he is a very frank, generous, and good young man, and a clever and cheerful companion; and my mother has to-day to thank him for about the pleasantest little trip she has ever enjoyed. But as for your wishing me to preserve a flower that he sent, or that you think he sent to me, why, I feel my face burning at the thought of what you suggest. And what can I say to him now, supposing he has seen it? Can I tell him that my own sister thought such things of me? Perhaps, after all, the simplest way to set matters right will be for me to break off the acquaintance altogether; and that will show him whether I was likely to have treasured up a scrap of London-pride in my Prayer-book.

“I am, your loving sister,


“WENNA ROSEWARNE.”

Meanwhile, Harry Trelyon was walking up and down the almost empty thoroughfare by the side of the sea ; the stars overhead shining clearly in the dark night, the dimly-seen waves falling monotonously on the shelving beach.

“To keep a flower, that is nothing,” he was saying to himself. “All girls do that, no matter who gives it to them. I suppose she has lots more, all with the proper initials and date attached.”

It was not an agreeable reflection ; he turned to other matters.

“If she were to care for me a little bit, would it be mean of me to try to carry her off from that man? Is it possible that he has the same regard for her that I have? In that case it would be mean. Now, when I think of her, the whole world seems filled with her presence somehow, and everything is changed. When I hear the sea in the morning, I think of her, and wonder where



she is ; when I see a fine day, I hope she is enjoying it somewhere ; the whole of Penzance has become magical. It is no longer the same town. I used to come to it, and never see it, in the old days, when one was busy about stables, and the pilchard-fishing, and the reports of the mines. Now the whole of Penzance has got a sort of charm in it, since Wenna Rosewarne has come to it. I look at the houses, and wonder if the people inside know anybody fit to compare with her ; and one becomes grateful to the good weather for shining round about her and making her happy. I suppose the weather knows what she deserves."

Then he began to argue the question as to whether it would be fair and honourable to seek to take away from another man the woman who had pledged herself to marry him ; and of course an easy and definite decision is sure to be arrived at when counsel on both sides, and jury, and judges

sitting *in banco*, are all one person, who conducts and closes the case as it suits himself.

He began by assuming such facts as suited his arguments, and ended by selecting and confirming such arguments as suited himself. Wenna Rosewarne cared nothing for Mr. Roscorla. She would be miserable if she married him; her own sister was continually hinting as much. Mr. Roscorla cared nothing for her except in so far as she might prove a pretty housewife for him. The selfishness that would sacrifice for its own purposes a girl's happiness was of a peculiarly despicable sort which ought to be combated, and deserved no mercy. Therefore, and because of all these things, Harry Trelyon was justified in trying to win Wenna Rosewarne's love.

One by one the people who had been strolling up and down the dark thoroughfare left it; he was almost alone now. He

walked along to the house in which the Rosewarnes were. There was no light in any of the windows. But might she not be sitting up there by herself, looking out on the starlit heavens, and listening to the waves? He wished to be able to say good-night to her once more.

How soon would she be up and out on the morrow? Early in the morning, when the young day was rising over the grey sea, and the sea-winds coming freshly in as if they were returning from the cold night? If he could but see her at daybreak, with all the world asleep around them, and with only themselves to watch the growing wonders of the dawn, might not he say something to her then that she would not be vexed to hear, and persuade her that a new sort of life lay before her if she would only enter it along with him? That was the notion that he continually dwelt on for self-justification, when he happened to take

the trouble to justify himself. The crisis of this girl's life was approaching. Other errors might be retrieved; that one, once committed, never. If he could only see her now, this is what he would say:—" *We can only live but once, Wenna; and this for us two would be life—our only chance of it. Whatever else may happen, that is no matter; let us make sure of this one chance, and face the future together, you full of sweetness and trust, I having plenty of courage for both. We will treat objectors and objections as they may arise—afterwards; perhaps they will be prudent and keep out of our way.*" And, indeed, he convinced himself that this was Wenna Rosewarne's one chance of securing happiness for her life, assuming, in a way, that he had love, as well as courage, sufficient for both.

He was early up next morning, and down on the promenade; but the day was

not likely to tempt Wenna to come out just then. A grey fog hung over land and sea ; the sea itself being a dull, leaden plain. Trelyon walked about, however, talking to everybody, as was his custom ; and everybody said the fog would clear and a fine day follow. This, in fact, happened ; and still Wenna did not make her appearance. The fog over the sea seemed to separate itself into clouds ; there was a dim, yellow light in the breaks. These breaks widened ; there was a glimmer of blue. Then, on the leaden plain, a glare of white light fell, twinkling in innumerable stars on the water. Everything promised a clear, bright day.

As a last resource, he thought he would go and get Juliott Penaluna, and persuade that young lady to come and be introduced to the Rosewarnes. At first Miss Penaluna refused point-blank. She asked him how he could expect her to do such a thing.

But then her Cousin Harry happened to be civil, and indeed kind in his manner to her; and when he was in one of those moods there was nothing she could refuse him. She went and got ready with an air of resignation on her comely face.

“Mind, Harry, I am not responsible,” she said, when she came back. “I am afraid I shall get into awful trouble about it.”

“And who will interfere?” said the young man, just as if he were looking about for some one anxious to be thrown from the top of the tower on St. Michael’s Mount.

“I shall be accused of conniving, you know; and I think I am very good-natured to do so much for you, Harry.”

“I think you are, Jue; you are a thoroughly good sort of girl when you like to be—that’s a fact. And now you will see whether what I have said about Miss Rosewarne is all gammon or not.”

“My poor boy, I wouldn’t say a word against her for the world. Do I want my head wrenched off? But if any one says anything to me about what I may do to-day, I shall have to tell the truth; and do you know what that is, Harry? I do really believe you are in love with that girl, past all argument; and there never was one of your family who would listen to reason. I know quite well what you will do. If she cares ever so little for you, you will marry her in spite of everybody, and probably against her own wish; if she doesn’t care for you, you will revenge yourself on the happy man of her choice, and probably murder him. Well, it isn’t my fault. I know what your mother will say——”

“Ah, you don’t know, Jue, what my mother thinks of her,” he said confidently.

“Oh yes; mothers think very well of a girl until they discover that she is going to marry their son.”

"Oh, stuff! why, the inconsistency——"

"It is the privilege of women to be inconsistent, Harry. Your mother will detest that girl if you try to marry her."

"I don't care."

"Of course not. No man of your family cares for anything that interferes with his own wishes. I suppose there's no use in my trying to show you what a fearful amount of annoyance and trouble you are preparing for yourself?"

"None; I'll take it as it comes—I'm not afraid."

They got down to the promenade; the forenoon was now bright and cheerful; a good many folks had come out to enjoy the sunlight and the cool sea-breeze. Miss Juliott was not at all disinclined to walk there with her handsome cousin, though he had forgotten his gloves, and was clearly not paying her very special attention.

"Jue," he said, suddenly, "I can see

Miss Rosewarne—right at the end of this road—can't you?"

"I haven't got the eyes of a hawk, you stupid boy," his cousin said.

"Oh, but I can recognize her dress a dozen times as far away. These are her pet colours at present—a soft cream-colour and black, with bits of dark red—can you see now?"

"I never before saw you pay the least attention to a lady's dress."

"Because you don't know how *she* dresses," he said, proudly.

She was coming along the parade, all alone.

"Well, it *is* a pretty dress," Miss Juliott said, "and I like the look of her face, Harry. You can't expect one girl to say any more than that of another girl, can you?"

"This is a very nice way of being able to introduce you," he said. "I suppose

you will be able to chaperon each other afterwards, when her mother can't go out?"

Wenna was coming quietly along, apparently rather preoccupied. Sometimes she looked out, with her dark, earnest, and yet wistful eyes, at the great plain of water quivering in the sunshine; she paid little heed to the people who went by. When, at length, she did see Harry Trelyon, she was quite near him, and she had just time to glance for a moment at his companion. The next moment—he could not tell how it all happened—she passed him with a slight bow of recognition, courteous enough, but nothing more. There was no especial look of friendliness in her eyes.

He stood there, rather bewildered.

"That is about as good as the cut direct, Harry," his cousin said. "Come along—don't stand there."

"Oh, but there's some mistake, Jue," he said.

“A girl never does a thing of that sort by mistake. Either she is vexed with you for walking with me—and that is improbable, for I doubt whether she saw me—or she thinks the ardour of your acquaintance should be moderated, and there I should agree with her. You don’t seem so vexed as one might have expected, Harry.”

“Vexed!” he said. “Why, can’t you tell by that girl’s face that she could do nothing capricious or unkind? Of course she has a reason; and I will find it out.”

CHAPTER X.

NOT THE LAST WORD.

As soon as he could decently leave his cousin at home, he did; and then he walked hastily down to the house in which Mrs. Rosewarne had taken rooms. Miss Rosewarne was not at home, the small maid-servant said. Was Mrs. Rosewarne? Yes; so he would see her.

He went upstairs, never thinking how his deep trouble about so insignificant an incident would strike a third person.

"Mrs. Rosewarne," he said, right out, "I want you to tell me if Wenna wishes our acquaintance to end. Has she been speaking to you? Just now, she passed

me in the street as if she did not wish to see me again."

"Probably," replied Mrs. Rosewarne, amused as well as surprised by the young man's impetuosity, "she did not see you then. Wenna often passes people so. Most likely she was thinking about other things; for she had another letter from Jamaica just before she went out."

"Oh, she has had another letter from Jamaica this morning!" Trelyon said, with an angry light appearing in his eyes. "That is it, is it?"

"I don't understand you," Mrs. Rosewarne was saying, when both of them heard Wenna enter below.

"Mrs. Rosewarne," he said, with a sudden entreaty in his voice, "would you mind letting me see Wenna alone for a couple of minutes? I want to ask her if she is offended with me—you won't mind, will you?"

"Not in the least," she said, good-naturedly; and then she added, at the door, "Mind, Mr. Trelyon, Wenna is easily hurt. You must speak gently to her."

About a minute afterwards, Wenna, having laid her hat and shawl aside, came into the room. When she found Trelyon there, alone, she almost shrank back, and her face paled somewhat; then she forced herself to go forward and shake hands with him, though her face still wore a frightened and constrained look.

"Wenna," he said, "don't go away. I want to speak to you for a minute. You are offended with me about something, and I want you to tell me why. If you wish our friendship to cease, say so, and I will obey you; but you must tell me why first."

"I am not offended with you, Mr. Trelyon," she said, in a low and nervous voice. "Do not think that. But—but I

think it will be better if you will let our friendship cease, as you say."

For a second he stared: then something of firmness came about his mouth.

"Oh, no," he said, "I will not, in this fashion. You've got to tell me what is the matter first. Now remember this. Not very long ago you chose to quarrel with me about nothing—absolutely about nothing. You know quite well that I meant no harm to you by lending Mr. Roscorla that money; yet you must needs flare up and give it me as hot as you could, all for nothing. What could I do? Why, only wait until you saw what a mistake you had made."

"It was very wrong of me," she said. "I ask your forgiveness. But now it is quite different. I am not angry with you at all. I should like to remain your friend; and yet I think it better not. I—I cannot explain to you, Mr. Trelyon; and I am sure you won't ask me, when I say so."

He looked at her for a moment, and then he said, gently and yet firmly—

“Look here, Wenna. You think I am only a boy. That may or may not be; but I am going to talk reasonably to you for once. Come over to this chair by the window, and sit down.”

She followed him in passive obedience. She took the one chair, he the other.

“Perhaps I am only a boy,” he said; “but I have knocked about a good deal, and I have kept my eyes as wide open as most folks. I suppose ill-natured people might say that, as I had nothing to do at Eglosilyan, I wanted to have a flirtation with the only girl who was handy. I know better. Year after year I saw more and more of you, bit by bit; and that after I had been abroad or living in other places in England from time to time. I got to believe that I had never seen anywhere any girl or woman who was so honest as you


are, and good in a dozen secret ways that needed a deal of discovering. I found out far more about you than you imagined. I heard of you in cottages that you never knew I was in; and everything I heard made me respect you more and more. Mind this too. I had no sort of personal liking for the sort of thing you were doing. I don't admire muggy little rooms, and poverty, and sick people, as appealing to a fine sentiment. There never was anything of the parson or of the benevolent old lady about me. I would rather give half-a-crown to an impertinent little schoolboy who had just whopped another boy bigger than himself, than give a halfpenny tract to a sickly infant in its mother's arms; that's original sin in me, I suppose. But all that squalid sort of work you were in only made the jewel shine the more. I used to think I should like to marry a very grand woman, who could be presented at Court without a

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tremor, who would come into a drawing-room as if she was conferring a favour on the world at large; and I certainly never thought I should find the best woman I had ever seen in back-kitchens sewing pinafores for children. And then, when I found her there, wasn't it natural I should put some store by her friendship? I suppose you didn't know what I thought of you, Wenna, because I kept chaffing you and Mabyne? I have told you something of it now; and now I want you to say whether you have a right to shunt me off like this without a word of explanation."

She sat quite still, silent and nervous. The rude and impetuous eloquence of his speech, broken by many a hesitating stammer, had touched her. There was more thoughtfulness and tenderness in this wild lad than she had supposed.

"How can I explain?" she burst out, suddenly. "I should cover myself with shame!"



“And what have you to be ashamed of?” he said, with a stare.

The distress she was obviously suffering was so great that he had almost a mind to take her at her word, and leave the house without further ado. Just at this moment, when he was considering what would be the most generous thing to do, she seemed to nerve herself to speak to him, and in a low and measured voice she said—

“Yes, I will tell you. I have had a letter this morning from Mr. Roscorla. He asks me if it is true that you are paying me such attention that people notice it; and he asks me if that is how I keep my promise to him.”

Something like a quiver of rage passed through the young man at this moment, but his teeth were kept firmly together. She did not look up to his face.

“That is not all. I must tell you that I was deeply shocked and grieved by this

letter; but on looking back over the past six weeks I think a suspicious person might have been justified in complaining to Mr. Roscorla. And—and—and, Mr. Trelyon, did you see that dried flower in my Prayer-book last night?"

Her resolution was fast ebbing away; he could see that her hands were clasped piteously together.

"Yes, I did," he said, boldly.

"And oh! what could you have thought of me!" she cried, in her distress. "Indeed, Mr. Trelyon, it was all a mistake. I did not keep the flower—I did not, indeed. And when I thought you had seen it, I could have died for shame."

"And why?" he said, in a way that made her lift up her startled eyes to his face. There was a strange look there, as of a man who had suddenly resolved to dare his fate. "For you have been frank with me, and so will I be with you. Why

should you not have kept that flower? Yes, I sent it to you; and with all the purpose that such a thing could carry. Yes, you may be as angry as you please; only listen, Wenna. You don't love that man whom you are engaged to marry; you know in your heart that you do not believe in his love for you; and are you surprised that people should wish to have you break off an engagement that will only bring you misery?"

"Mr. Trelyon!"

"Wenna, one minute—you must hear me. Do with my offer what you like—only here it is: give me the power to break off this engagement, and I will. Give me the right to do that! Don't mind me in the matter. It is true I love you—there, I will say it again: there is nothing I think of from morning till night but my love for you; and if you would say that some time I might ask you to

be my wife, you would give me more happiness than you could dream of. But I don't wish that now. I will remain your friend, if you like, Wenna; only let me do this thing for you; and when you are free, you can then say Yes or No."

She rose, not proud and indignant, but weeping bitterly.

"I have deserved this," she said, apparently overwhelmed with mortification and self-reproach. "I have earned this shame, and I must bear it. I do not blame you, Mr. Trelyon—it is I who have done this. How many weeks is it since the man left England to whom I promised to be faithful? and already—but this I can do, Mr. Trelyon: I will bid you good-bye now, and I will never see you again."

Her face was quite pale. She held out her hand.

"No," he said firmly. "We do not part like that, Wenna. First, let me say

that you have nothing to accuse yourself of. You have done nothing, and said nothing, of which any man, however mean and suspicious, could complain. Perhaps I was too hasty in speaking of my love for you. In that case, I've got to pay for my folly."

"And it is folly, Mr. Trelyon!" she said, passionately, and yet with nothing but tenderness in her face. "How could you have thought of marrying me? Why, the future that ought to lie before you is far more than you can imagine yet; and you would go and hamper it by marrying an innkeeper's daughter! It is folly, indeed; and you will see that very soon. But—but I am very sorry all this has occurred; it is another grief to me that I have troubled you. I think I was born to bring grief to all my friends."

He was anxiously debating what he should do; and he needed all his wits at

that moment, for his own feelings were strong within him, and clamouring for expression. Would he insist? Would he bear down all opposition? Happily, quieter counsels prevailed; for there was no mistaking the absolute truthfulness of what the girl had said.

"Well, Wenna," he said, "I will do anything you like, only to remain your friend. Is that possible? Will you forgive all that I have said if I make you a promise not to repeat it, and never again to mention your engagement to Mr. Roscorla?"

"No, we must part now altogether," she said slowly. Then, by haphazard, she glanced up at his face for a moment, and there was a great sadness in her eyes. "It is a hard thing to part. Perhaps it will not be necessary that you should never come to see me. But we must not be friends as we have been; for I have my duty to do towards him."

"Then I may come to see you sometimes?"

She hesitated.

"You may come to see my mother sometimes. And I will always think of you as a dear friend, whether I see you or not."

He went outside, and drew a long breath.

"I had to keep a tight grip on the reins that time," he was thinking to himself; "a precious tight grip; but I did it."

He thought of the look there was in her eyes when she finally bid him good-bye. His face grew the happier as he thought of it. He was clearly not at all down-hearted about his rejection; on the contrary, he went and told his Cousin Juliott that the little affair of the morning had been quite satisfactorily arranged; that Miss Wenna and he were very good friends again; and that it was quite a mistake to imagine that she was already married to Mr. Roscorla.

“Harry,” said his cousin, “I strictly forbid you to mention that gentleman’s name.”

“Why, Jue?” he said.

“Because I will not listen to the bad language you invariably use whenever you speak of him ; and you ought to remember that you are in a clergyman’s house. I wonder Miss Rosewarne is not ashamed to have your acquaintance ; but I dare say you amend your ways when you are in her presence. She’ll have plenty to reform if ever she takes you for a husband.”

“That’s true enough, Jue,” the young man said, penitently. “I believe I’m a bad lot ; but then, look at the brilliant contrast which the future will present. You know that my old grandmother is always saying to me, ‘ Harry, you were born with as many manners as most folks ; and you’ve used none ; so you’ll have a rare stock to come and go on when you begin.’ ”

CHAPTER XI.

A PERILOUS TRUCE.

THE very stars in their courses seemed to fight for this young man.


No sooner had Wenna Rosewarne fled to her own room, there to think over in a wild and bewildered way all that had just happened, than her heart smote her sorely. She had not acted prudently. She had forgotten her self-respect. She ought to have forbidden him to come near her again—at least, until such time as this foolish fancy of his should have passed away and been forgotten.

How could she have parted with him so calmly, and led him to suppose that their former relations were unaltered? She looked

back on the forced quietude of her manner, and was herself astonished. Now her heart was beating rapidly; her trembling fingers were unconsciously twisting and untwisting a bit of ribbon; her head seemed giddy with the recollection of that brief and strange interview. Then, somehow, she thought of the look on his face when she told him that henceforth they must be strangers to each other. It seemed hard that he should be badly used for what was, perhaps, no intentional fault. If anybody had been in fault, it was herself, in being blind to a possibility to which even her own sister had drawn her attention; and so the punishment ought to fall on her.

She would humble herself before Mr. Roscorla. She would force herself to be affectionate towards him in her letters. She would even write to Mabyn, and beg of her to take no notice of that angry remonstrance.

Then Wenna thought of her mother, and how she ought to tell her of all these things. But how could she? During the past day or two Mrs. Rosewarne had been at times singularly fretful and anxious. No letter had come from her husband. In vain did Wenna remind her that men were more careless of such small matters than women, and that it was too soon to expect her father to sit down and write. Mrs. Rosewarne sat brooding over her husband's silence; then she would get up in an excited fashion and declare her intention of going straight back to Eglosilyan; and these fitful moods preyed on the health of the invalid. Ought Wenna to risk increasing her anxiety by telling her this strange tale? She would doubtless misunderstand it. She might be angry with Harry Trelyon. She would certainly be surprised that Wenna had given him permission to see her again—not knowing that the girl, in her



forced composure, had been talking to him as if this avowal of his were of no great moment.

All the same Wenna had a secret fear that she had been imprudent in giving him this permission ; and the most she could do now was to make his visits as few, short, and ceremonious as possible. She would avoid him by every means in her power ; and the first thing was to make sure that he should not call on them again while they remained in Penzance.

So she went down to the small parlour in a much more equable frame of mind, though her heart was still throbbing in an unusual way. The moment she entered the room she saw that something had occurred to disturb her mother. Mrs. Rosewarne turned from the window, and there was an excited look in her eyes.

“ Wenna,” she said, hurriedly, “ did you see that carriage ? Did you see that

woman? Who was with her? Did you see who was with her? I know it was she—not if I live a hundred years could I forget that—that devil in human shape!”


“Mother, I don’t know what you mean,” Wenna said, wholly aghast.

Her mother had gone to the window again, and she was saying to herself, hurriedly, and in a low voice—

“No, you don’t know; you don’t know—why should you know? That shameless creature! And to drive by here—she must have known I was here. Oh, the shamelessness of the woman!”

She turned to Wenna again.

“Wenna, I thought Mr. Trelyon was here. How long has he gone? I want to see him most particularly—most particularly, and only for a moment. He is sure to know all the strangers at his hotel, is he not? I want to ask him some questions—Wenna, will you go at once and bid him come to see me for a moment?”



“Mother!” Wenna said—how could she go to the hotel with such a message?

“Well, send a note to him, Wenna—send a note by the girl downstairs. What harm is there in that?”

“Lie down then, mother,” said the girl calmly, “and I will send a message to Mr. Trelyon.”

She drew her chair to the table, and her cheeks crimsoned to think of what he might imagine this letter to mean when he got the envelope in his hands. Her fingers trembled as she wrote the date at the head of the note. Then she came to the word “Dear,” and it seemed to her that if shame were a punishment, she was doing sufficient penance for her indiscretion of that morning. Yet the note was not a compromising one. It merely said, “Dear Mr. Trelyon,—If you have a moment to spare, my mother would be most obliged to you if you would call on her. I hope you will forgive

the trouble.—Yours sincerely, Wenna Rosewarne.”

When the young man got that note—he was just entering the hotel when the servant arrived—he stared with surprise. He told the girl he would call on Mrs. Rosewarne directly. Then he followed her.

He never for a moment doubted that this note had reference to his own affairs. Wenna had told her mother what had happened. The mother wished to see him to ask him to cease visiting them. Well, he was prepared for that. He would ask Wenna to leave the room. He would attack the mother boldly, and tell her what he thought of Mr. Roscorla. He would appeal to her to save her daughter from the impending marriage. He would win her over to be his secret ally and friend; and while nothing should be done precipitately to alarm Wenna or arouse her suspicions, might not these two carry the citadel of her

heart in time, and hand over the keys to the rightful lord? It was a pleasant speculation; it was at least marked by that audacity that never wholly forsook Master Harry Trelyon. Of course, he was the rightful lord; ready to bid all false claimants, rivals, and pretenders beware.

And yet, as he walked up to the house, some little tremor of anxiety crept into his heart. It was no mere game of brag in which he was engaged. As he went into the parlour, Wenna stepped quietly by him, her eyes downcast; and he knew that all he cared to look forward to in the world depended on the decision of that quiet little person with the sensitive mouth and the earnest eyes. Fighting was not of much use there.

“ Well, Mrs. Rosewarne,” said he, rather shamefacedly, “ I suppose you mean to scold me ? ”

Her answer surprised him. She took

no heed of his remark, but in a vehement, excited way, began to ask him questions about a woman whom she described. He stared at her.

“I hope you don’t know anything about that elegant creature?” he said.

She did not wholly tell him the story, but left him to guess at some portions of it; and then she demanded to know all about the woman and her companion, and how long they had been in Penzance, and where they were going? Master Harry was by chance able to reply to certain of her questions. The answers comforted her greatly. Was he quite sure that she was married? What was her husband’s name? She was no longer Mrs. Shirley? Would he find out all he could? Would he forgive her asking him to take all this trouble; and would he promise to say no word about it to Wenna?

When all this had been said and done,

the young man felt himself considerably embarrassed. Was there to be no mention of his own affairs? So far from remonstrating with him and forbidding him the house, Mrs. Rosewarne was almost effusively grateful to him, and could only beg him a thousand times not to mention the subject to her daughter.

“Oh, of course not,” said he, rather bewildered. “But—but I thought from the way in which she left the room that—that perhaps I had offended her.”

“Oh no, I am sure that is not the case,” said Mrs. Rosewarne, and she immediately went and called Wenna, who came into the room with rather an anxious look on her face, but she immediately perceived the change in her mother’s mood. The demon of suspicion and jealousy had been as suddenly exorcised as it had been summoned. Mrs. Rosewarne’s fine eyes were lit by quite a new brightness and gaiety of spirits. She

bade Wenna declare what fearful cause of offence Mr. Trelyon had given ; and laughed when the young man, blushing somewhat, hastily assured both of them that it was all a stupid mistake of his own.

“Oh yes,” Wenna said, rather nervously, “it is a mistake. I am sure you have given me no offence at all, Mr. Trelyon.”

It was an embarrassing moment for two, at least, out of these three persons ; and Mrs. Rosewarne, in her abundant good-nature, could not understand their awkward silence. Wenna was apparently looking out of the window at the bright blue bay and the boats ; and yet the girl was not ordinarily so occupied when Mr. Trelyon was present. As for him, he had got his hat in his hands ; he seemed to be much concerned about it, or about his boots ; one did not often find Harry Trelyon actually showing shyness.

At last he said, desperately—

“Mrs. Rosewarne, perhaps you would go out for a sail in the afternoon? I could get you a nice little yacht, and some rods and lines. Won’t you?”

Mrs. Rosewarne was in a kindly humour. She said she would be very glad to go, for Wenna was growing tired of always sitting by the window. This would be some little variety for her.

“I hope you won’t consider me, mother,” said the young lady quickly, and with some asperity. “I am quite pleased to sit by the window—I could do so always. And it is very wrong of us to take up so much of Mr. Trelyon’s time.”

“Because Mr. Trelyon’s time is of so much use to him,” said that young man, with a laugh; and then he told them when to expect him in the afternoon, and went his way.

He was in much better spirits when he

went out. He whistled as he went. The splash of the blue sea all along the shingle seemed to have a sort of laugh in it; he was in love with Penzance and all its beautiful neighbourhood. Once again, he was saying to himself, he would spend a quiet and delightful afternoon with Wenna Rosewarne, even if that were to be the last. He would surrender himself to the gentle intoxication of her presence. He would get a glimpse, from time to time, of her dark eyes when she was looking wistfully and absently over the sea. It was no breach of the implied contract with her that he should have seized this occasion. He had been sent for. And if it was necessary that he should abstain from seeing her for any great length of time, why this single afternoon would not make much difference. Afterwards, he would obey her wishes in any manner she pleased.

He walked into the hotel. There was

a gentleman standing in the hall, whose acquaintance Master Harry had condescended to make. He was a person of much money, uncertain grammar, and oppressive generosity; he wore a frilled shirt and diamond studs, and he had such a vast admiration for this handsome, careless, and somewhat rude young man, that he would have been very glad had Mr. Trelyon dined with him every evening, and taken the trouble to win any reasonable amount of money of him at billiards afterwards. Mr. Trelyon had not as yet graced his table.

"Oh, Grainger," said the young man, "I want to speak to you. Will you dine with me to-night at eight?"

"No, no, no," said Mr. Grainger, shaking his head in humble protest, "that isn't fair. You dine with me. It ain't the first or the second time of asking either."

"But look here," said Trelyon, "I've got lots more to ask of you. I want you to

lend me that little cutter of yours for the afternoon ; will you ? You send your man on board to see she's all right, and I'll pull out to her in about half-an-hour's time. You'll do that, won't you, like a good fellow ? ”

Mr. Grainger was not only willing to lend the yacht, but also his own services, to see that she properly received so distinguished a guest ; whereupon Trelyon had to explain that he wanted the small craft merely to give a couple of ladies a sail for an hour or so. Then Mr. Grainger would have his man instructed to let the ladies have some tea on board ; and he would give Master Harry the key of certain receptacles, in which he would find cans of preserved meat, fancy biscuits, jam, and even a few bottles of dry Sillery ; finally he would immediately hurry off to see about fishing-rods. Trelyon had to acknowledge to himself that this worthy person deserved the best dinner that the hotel could produce.

In the afternoon he walked along to fetch Mrs. Rosewarne and her daughter, his face bright with expectation. Mrs. Rosewarne was dressed and ready when he went in; but she said—

“I am afraid I can’t go, Mr. Trelyon. Wenna says she is a little tired, and would rather stay at home.”

“Wenna, that isn’t fair,” he said, obviously hurt. “You ought to make some little effort when you know it will do your mother good. And it will do you good too, if only you make up your mind to go.”

She hesitated for a moment; she saw that her mother was disappointed. Then, without a word, she went and put on her hat and shawl.

“Well,” he said, approvingly, “you are very reasonable, and very obedient. But we can’t have you go with us with such a face as that. People would say we were going to a funeral.”

A shy smile came over the gentle features, and she turned aside.

“And we can’t have you pretend that we forced you to go. If we go at all, you must lead the way.”

“You would tease the life out of a saint!” she said, with a vexed and embarrassed laugh, and then she marched out before them, very glad to be able to conceal her heightened colour.

But much of her reserve vanished when they had set sail, and when the small cutter was beginning to make way through the light and plashing waves. Wenna’s face brightened. She no longer let her two companions talk exclusively to each other. She began to show a great curiosity about the little yacht; she grew anxious to have the lines flung out; no words of hers could express her admiration for the beauty of the afternoon and of the scene around her.

"Now, are you glad you came out?" he said to her.

"Yes," she answered shyly.

"And you'll take my advice another time?"

"Do *you* ever take any one's advice?" she said, venturing to look up.

"Yes, certainly," he answered, "when it agrees with my own inclination. Who ever does any more than that?"

They were now a good bit away from land.

"Skipper," said Trelyon to Mr. Granger's man, "we'll put her about now, and let her drift. Here is a cigar for you; you can take it up to the bow and smoke it, and keep a good look-out for the sea-serpent."

By this arrangement they obtained, as they sat and idly talked, an excellent view of all the land around the bay, and of the pale, clear sunset shining in the western skies. They lay almost motionless in the lapping water; the light breeze scarcely

stirred the loose canvas. From time to time they could hear a sound of calling or laughing from the distant fishing-boats; and that only seemed to increase the silence around them.

It was an evening that invited to repose and reverie; there were not even the usual fiery colours of the sunset to arouse and fix attention by their rapidly changing and glowing hues. The town itself, lying darkly all around the sweep of the bay, was dusky and distant; elsewhere all the world seemed to be flooded with the silver light coming over from behind the western hills. The sky was of the palest blue; the long mackerel clouds that stretched across were of the faintest yellow and lightest grey; and into that shining grey rose the black stems of the trees that were just over the outline of these low heights. St. Michael's Mount had its summit touched by the pale glow; the rest

of the giant rock and the far stretches of sea around it were grey with mist. But close by the boat there was a sharper light on the lapping waves and on the tall spars ; while it was warm enough to heighten the colour on Wenna's face as she sat and looked silently at the great and open world around her.

They were drifting in more ways than one. Wenna almost forgot what had occurred in the morning. She was so pleased to see her mother pleased, that she talked quite unreservedly to the young man who had wrought the change, and was ready to believe all that Mrs. Rosewarne said in private about his being so delightful and cheerful a companion. As for him, he was determined to profit by this last opportunity. If the strict rules of honour demanded that Mr. Roscorla should have fair play—or if Wenna wished him to absent himself, which was of more con-

sequence than Mr. Roscorla's interests—he would make his visits few and formal; but in the mean time, at least, they would have this one pleasant afternoon together. Sometimes, it is true, he rebelled against the uncertain pledge he had given her. Why should he not seek to win her? What had the strict rules of honour to do with the prospect of a young girl allowing herself to be sacrificed, while here he was able and willing to snatch her away from her fate?

“How fond you are of the sea and of boats!” he said to her. “Sometimes I think I shall have a big schooner yacht built for myself, and take her to the Mediterranean, going from place to place just as one took the fancy. But it would be very dull by yourself, wouldn't it, even if you had a dozen men on board? What you want is to have a small party all very friendly with each other, and at night you

would sit up on deck and sing songs. And I think you would like those old-fashioned songs that you sing, Miss Wenna, all the better for hearing them so far away from home—at least, I should; but then I'm an outer barbarian. I think you, now, would be delighted with the grand music abroad—with the operas, you know, and all that. I've had to knock about these places with people; but I don't care about it. I would rather hear 'Norah, the Pride of Kildare,' or 'The Maid of Llangollen'—because, I suppose, these young women are more in my line. You see, I shouldn't care to make the acquaintance of a gorgeous creature with black hair and a train of yellow satin half a mile long, who tosses up a gilt goblet when she sings a drinking-song, and then gets into a frightful passion about what you don't understand. Wouldn't you rather meet the 'Maid of Llangollen' coming along a country road—coming in by Mara-

zation over there, for example, with a bright print dress all smelling of lavender, and a basket of fresh eggs over her arm? Well — what was I saying? Oh yes! don't you think if you were away in the Adriatic, and sitting up on deck at night, you would make the people have a quiet cry when you sang 'Home, sweet home'? The words are rather silly, aren't they? But they make you think of such a lot if you hear them abroad."

"And when are you going away this year, Mr. Trelyon?" Wenna said, looking down.

"Oh, I don't know," he said cheerfully; he would have no question of his going away interfere with the happiness of the present moment.

At length, however, they had to bethink themselves of getting back, for the western skies were deepening in colour, and the evening air was growing chill. They ran

the small cutter back to her moorings; then they put off in the small boat for the shore. It was a beautiful, quiet evening. Wenna, who had taken off her glove and was allowing her bare hand to drag through the rippling water, seemed to be lost in distant and idle fancies not altogether of a melancholy nature.

"Wenna," her mother said, "you will get your hand perfectly chilled."

The girl drew back her hand, and shook the water off her dripping fingers. Then she uttered a slight cry.

"My ring!" she said, looking with absolute fright at her hand and then at the sea.

Of course, they stopped the boat instantly; but all they could do was to stare at the clear dark water. The distress of the girl was beyond expression. This was no ordinary trinket that had been lost; it was a gage of plighted affection given her by

one now far away, and in his absence she had carelessly flung it into the sea. She had no fear of omens, as her sister had; but surely, of all things in the world, she ought to have treasured up this ring. In spite of herself, tears sprang to her eyes. Her mother in vain attempted to make light of the loss. And then at last Harry Trelyon, driven almost beside himself by seeing the girl so plunged in grief, hit upon a wild fashion of consoling her.

“Wenna,” he said, “don’t disturb yourself! Why, we can easily get you the ring. Look at the rocks there—a long bank of smooth sand slopes out from them, and your ring is quietly lying upon the sand. There is nothing easier than to get it up with a dredging machine—I will undertake to let you have it by to-morrow afternoon.”

Mrs. Rosewarne thought he was joking; but he effectually persuaded Wenna, at all events, that she should have her ring next


day. Then he discovered that he would be just in time to catch the half-past six train to Plymouth, where he would get the proper apparatus, and return in the morning.

"It was a pretty ring," said he. "There were six stones in it, weren't there?"

"Five," she said: so much she knew, though it must be confessed she had not studied that token of Mr. Roscorla's affection with the earnest solicitude which most young ladies bestow on the first gift of their lover.

Trelyon jumped into a fly, and drove off to the station, where he sent back an apology to Mr. Grainger. Wenna went home more perturbed than she had been for many a day, and that not solely on account of the lost ring.

Everything seemed to conspire against her, and keep her from carrying out her



honourable resolutions. That sail in the afternoon she could not well have avoided; but she had determined to take some opportunity of begging Mr. Trelyon not to visit them again while they remained in Penzance. Now, however, he was coming next day; and, whether or not he was successful in his quest after the missing ring, would she not have to show herself abundantly grateful for all his kindness?

In putting away her gloves, she came upon the letter of Mr. Roscorla, which she had not yet answered. She shivered slightly; the handwriting on the envelope seemed to reproach her. And yet something of a rebellious spirit rose in her against this imaginary accusation; and she grew angry that she was called upon to serve this harsh and inconsiderate taskmaster, and give him explanations which humiliated her. He had no right to ask questions about Mr. Trelyon. He ought

not to have listened to idle gossip. He should have had sufficient faith in her promised word; and if he only knew the torture of doubt and anxiety she was suffering on his behalf——

She did not pursue these speculations further; but it was well with Mr. Roscorla that she did not at that moment sit down and answer his letter.

CHAPTER XII.

FURTHER ENTANGLEMENTS.

“MOTHER,” said Wenna, that night, “what vexed you so this morning? Who was the woman who went by?”

“Don’t ask me, Wenna,” the mother said, rather uneasily. “It would do you no good to know. And you must not speak of that woman—she is too horrid a creature to be mentioned by a young girl ever.”

Wenna looked surprised; and then she said, warmly—

“And if she is so, mother, how could you ask Mr. Trelyon to have anything to do with her? Why should you send for him? Why should he be spoken to about her?”

“Mr. Trelyon!” her mother said, impatiently. “You seem to have no thought now for anybody but Mr. Trelyon. Surely the young man can take care of himself.”

The reproof was just; the justice of it was its sting. She was indeed thinking too much about the young man, and her mother was right in saying so; but who was to understand the extreme anxiety that possessed her to bring these dangerous relations to an end?

On the following afternoon Wenna, sitting alone at the window, heard Trelyon enter below. The young person who had charge of such matters allowed him to go up the stairs and announce himself as a matter of course. He tapped at the door, and came into the room.

“Where’s your mother, Wenna? The girl said she was here. However, never mind—I’ve brought you something that will astonish you. What do you think of that?”

She scarcely looked at the ring, so great was her embarrassment. That the present of one lover should be brought back to her by another was an awkward, almost a humiliating, circumstance. Yet she was glad as well as ashamed.

“Oh, Mr. Trelyon, how can I thank you?” she said, in her low, earnest voice. “All you seem to care for is to make other people happy—and the trouble you have taken too!”

She forgot to look at the ring—even when he pointed out how the washing in the sea had made it bright. She never asked about the dredging. Indeed, she was evidently disinclined to speak of this matter in any way, and kept the finger with the ring on it out of sight.

“Mr. Trelyon,” she said then, with equal steadiness of voice, “I am going to ask something more from you; and I am sure you will not refuse it——”

"I know," said he, hastily, "and let me have the first word. I have been thinking over our position, during this trip to Plymouth and back. Well, I think I have become a nuisance to you—wait a bit, let me say my say in my own way—I can see that I only embarrass you when I call on you, and that the permission you give me is only leading to awkwardness and discomfort. Mind, I don't think you are acting fairly to yourself or to me in forbidding me to mention again what I told you. I know you're wrong. You should let me show you what sort of a life lies before you—but there, I promised to keep clear of that. Well, I will do what you like; and if you'd rather have me stay away altogether, I will do that. I don't want to be a nuisance to you. But mind this, Wenna, I do it because you wish it—I don't do it because I think any man is bound to respect an engagement which—which—which, in fact, he doesn't respect——."

His eloquence broke down; but his meaning was clear. He stood there before her, ready to accept her decision with all meekness and obedience; but giving her frankly to understand that he did not any the more countenance or consider as a binding thing her engagement to Mr. Roscorla.

“Mind you,” he said, “I am not quite as indifferent about all this as I look. It isn’t the way of our family, to put their hands in their pockets and wait for orders. But I can’t fight with you. Many a time I wish there was a man in the case—then he and I might have it out; but as it is, I suppose I have got to do what you say, Wenna, and that’s the long and the short of it.”

She did not hesitate. She went forward and offered him her hand; and with her frank eyes looking him in the face, she said—

"You have said what I wished to say, and I feared I had not the courage to say it. Now you are acting bravely. Perhaps at some future time we may become friends again—oh yes, and I do hope that!—but in the mean time you will treat me as if I were a stranger to you!"

"That is quite impossible," said he, decisively. "You ask too much, Wenna."

"Would not that be the simpler way?" she said, looking at him again with the frank and earnest eyes; and he knew she was right.

"And the length of time?" he said.

"Until Mr. Roscorla comes home again, at all events," she said.

She had touched an angry chord.

"What has he to do with us?" the young man said, almost fiercely. "I refuse to have him come in as arbiter or in any way whatever. Let him mind his own business; and I can tell you, when he and

I come to talk over this engagement of yours——”

“ You promised not to speak of that,” she said quietly, and he instantly ceased.

“ Well, Wenna,” he said, after a minute or two, “ I think you ask too much ; but you must have it your own way. I won’t annoy you and drive you into a corner—you may depend on that. But to be perfect strangers for an indefinite time !—then you won’t speak to me when I see you passing to church ? ”

“ Oh yes,” she said, looking down ; “ I did not mean strangers like that.”

“ And I thought,” said he, with something more than disappointment in his face, “ that when I proposed to—to relieve you from my visits, you would at least let us have one more afternoon together—only one—for a drive, you know. It would be nothing to you—it would be something for me to remember ——”

She would not recognize the fact, but for a brief moment his under lip quivered ; and somehow she seemed to know it, though she dared not look up to his face.

“ One afternoon—only one, to-morrow—next day, Wenna ? Surely you cannot refuse me that ? ”

Then, looking at her with a great compassion in his eyes, he suddenly altered his tone.

“ I think I ought to be hanged,” he said in a vexed way. “ You are the only person in the world I care for, and every time I see you I plunge you into trouble. Well, this is the last time. Good-bye, Wenna ! ”

Almost involuntarily she put out her hand ; but it was with the least perceptible gesture to bid him remain. Then she went past him ; and there were tears running down her face.

“ If—if you will wait a moment,” she

said, "I will see if mamma and I can go with you to-morrow afternoon."

She went out and he was left alone. Each word that she had uttered had pierced his heart; but which did he feel the more deeply—remorse that he should have insisted on this slight and useless concession, or bitter rage against the circumstances that environed them, and the man who was altogether responsible for these? There was now at least one person in the world who greatly longed for the return of Mr. Roscorla.

CHAPTER XIII.

FAREWELL!

"Yes, it is true," the young man said, next morning, to his cousin, "this is the last time I shall see her for many a day."

He was standing with his back to her, moodily staring out of the window.

"Well, Harry," his cousin said, gently enough, "you won't be hurt if I say it is a very good thing? I am glad to see you have so much patience and reasonableness. Indeed, I think Miss Rosewarne has very much improved you in that respect; and it is very good advice she has given you now."

"Oh yes, it is all very well to talk!" he said impatiently. "Common sense is pre-

cious easy when you are quite indifferent. Of course, she is quite indifferent, and she says, 'Don't trouble me!' What can one do but go? But if she was not so indifferent——"

He turned suddenly.

"Jue, you can't tell what trouble I am in! Do you know that sometimes I have fancied she was not quite so indifferent—I have had the cheek to think so from one or two things she said—and then, if that were so, it is enough to drive one mad to think of leaving her. How could I leave her, Jue? If any one cared for you, would you quietly sneak off in order to consult your own comfort and convenience? Would you be patient and reasonable then?"

"Harry, don't talk in that excited way. Listen. She does not ask you to go away for your sake, but for hers."

"For her sake?" he repeated, staring.
"If she is indifferent, how can that matter

to her? Well, I suppose I am a nuisance to her—as much as I am to myself. There it is. I am an interloper.”

“My poor boy,” his cousin said, with a kindly smile, “you don’t know your own mind two minutes running. During this past week you have been blown about by all sorts of contrary winds of opinion and fancy. Sometimes you thought she cared for you—sometimes no. Sometimes you thought it a shame to interfere with Mr. Roscorla; then again you grew indignant and would have slaughtered him. Now you don’t know whether you ought to go away or stop to persecute her. Don’t you think she is the best judge?”

“No, I don’t,” he said. “I think she is no judge of what is best for her, because she never thinks of that. She wants somebody by her to insist on her being properly selfish.”

“That would be a pretty lesson.”

"A necessary one, anyhow, with some women, I can tell you. But I suppose I must go, as she says. I couldn't bear meeting her about Eglosilyan, and be scarcely allowed to speak to her. Then when that hideous little beast comes back from Jamaica, fancy seeing them walk about together! I must cut the whole place. I shall go into the army—it's the only profession open to a fool like me, and they say it won't be long open either. When I come back, Jue, I suppose you'll be Mrs. Tres-sider."

"I am very sorry," his cousin said, not heeding the reference to herself; "I never expected to see you so deep in trouble, Harry. But you have youth and good spirits on your side: you will get over it."

"I suppose so," he said, not very cheerfully; and then he went off to see about the carriage which was to take Wenna and himself for their last drive together.

At the same time that he was talking to his cousin, Wenna was seated at her writing-desk answering Mr. Roscorla's letter. Her brows were knit together; she was evidently labouring at some difficult and disagreeable task. Her mother, lying on the sofa, was regarding her with an amused look.

"What is the matter, Wenna? That letter seems to give you a deal of trouble."

The girl put down her pen with some trace of vexation in her face.

"Yes, indeed, mother. How is one to explain delicate matters in a letter? Every phrase seems capable of misconstruction. And then the mischief it may cause!"

"But surely you don't need to write with such care to Mr. Roscorla?"

Wenna coloured slightly, and hesitated, as she answered—

"Well, mother, it is something peculiar. I did not wish to trouble you; but after all

I don't think you will vex yourself about so small a thing. Mr. Roscorla has been told stories about me. He is angry that Mr. Trelyon should visit us so often. And—and—I am trying to explain. That is all, mother."

"It is quite enough, Wenna; but I am not surprised. Of course, if foolish persons liked to misconstrue Mr. Trelyon's visits, they might make mischief. I see no harm in them myself. I suppose the young man found an evening at the inn amusing; and I can see that he likes you very well, as many other people do. But you know how you are situated, Wenna. If Mr. Roscorla objects to your continuing an acquaintance with Mr. Trelyon, your duty is clear."


"I do not think it is, mother," Wenna said, an indignant flush of colour appearing in her face. "I should not be justified in throwing over any friend or acquaintance merely because Mr. Roscorla had heard

rumours. I would not do it. He ought not to listen to such things—he ought to have greater faith in me. But at the same time I have asked Mr. Trelyon not to come here so often—I have done so already—and after to-day, mother, the gossips will have nothing to report.”

“That is better, Wenna,” the mother said; “I shall be sorry myself to miss the young man, for I like him; but it is better you should attend to Mr. Roscorla’s wishes. And don’t answer his letter in a vexed or angry way, Wenna.”

She was certainly not doing so. Whatever she might be thinking, a deliberate and even anxious courtesy was visible in the answer she was sending him. Her pride would not allow her to apologize for what had been done, in which she had seen no wrong; but as to the future she was earnest in her promises. And yet she could not help saying a good word for Trelyon.

“You have known him longer than I have,” she wrote, “and you know what his character is. I could see nothing wrong in his coming to see my family and myself; nor did you say anything against him while you saw him with us. I am sure you believe he is straightforward, honest, and frank; and if his frankness sometimes verges upon rudeness, he is of late greatly improved in that respect—as in many others—and he is most respectful and gentle in his manners. As for his kindness to my mother and myself, we could not shut our eyes to it. Here is the latest instance of it; although I feel deeply ashamed to tell you the story. We were returning in a small boat, and I was carelessly letting my hand drag through the water, when somehow the ring you gave me dropped off. Of course, we all considered it lost—all except Mr. Trelyon, who took the trouble to go at once all the way to Plymouth for a



dredging-machine, and the following afternoon I was overjoyed to find him return with the lost ring, which I had scarcely dared hope to see again. How many gentlemen would have done so much for a mere acquaintance? I am sure if you had been here you would have been ashamed of me if I had not been grateful to him. Now, however, since you appear to attach importance to these idle rumours, I have asked Mr. Trelyon——”

So the letter went on. She would not have written so calmly if she had foreseen the passion which her ingenuous story about the dredging-machine was destined to arouse. When Mr. Roscorla read that simple narrative, he first stared with astonishment as though she were making some foolish joke. Directly he saw she was serious, however, his rage and mortification were indescribable. Here was this young man, not content with hanging about the girl so that

neighbours talked, but actually imposing on her credulity, and making a jest of that engaged ring which ought to have been sacred to her. Mr. Roscorla at once saw through the whole affair—the trip to Plymouth, the purchasing of a gipsy-ring that could have been matched a dozen times over anywhere—the return to Penzance with a cock-and-bull story about a dredging-machine. So hot was his anger that it overcame his prudence. He would start for England at once. He had taken no such resolution when he heard from the friendly and communicative Mr. Barnes that Mr. Trelyon's conduct with regard to Wenna was causing scandal ; but this making a fool of him in his absence he could not bear. At any cost he would set out for England ; arrange matters more to his satisfaction by recalling Wenna to a sense of her position ; then he would return to Jamaica. His affairs there were already promising so well that he could afford the trip.

Meanwhile, Wenna had just finished her letter when Mr. Trelyon drove up with the carriage, and shortly afterwards came into the room. He seemed rather grave, and yet not at all sentimentally sad. He addressed himself mostly to Mrs. Rosewarne, and talked to her about the Port Isaac fishing, the emigration of the miners, and other matters. Then Wenna slipped away to get ready.

"Mrs. Rosewarne," he said, "you asked me to find out what I could about that red-faced person, you know. Well, here is an advertisement which may interest you. I came on it quite accidentally last night in the smoking-room of the hotel."

It was a marriage advertisement, cut from a paper about a week old. The name of the lady was "Katherine Ann, widow of the late J. T. Shirley, Esq., of Barrackpore."

"Yes! I was sure it was that woman!"

Mrs. Rosewarne said eagerly. "And so she is married again?"

"I fancied the gay young things were here on their wedding-trip," Trelyon said carelessly. "They amused me. I like to see turtle-doves of fifty billing and cooing on the promenade, especially when one of them wears a brown wig, has an Irish accent, and drinks brandy-and-water at breakfast. But he is a good billiard-player; yes, he is an uncommonly good billiard-player. He told me last night he had beaten the Irish Secretary the other day in the billiard-room of the House of Commons. I humbly suspect that was a lie. At least, I can't remember anything about a billiard-table in the House of Commons, and I was two or three times through every bit of it when I was a little chap, with an uncle of mine, who was a member then; but perhaps they've got a billiard-table now—who knows? He told me he had stood for an

Irish borough—spent 3000*l.* on a population of 284—and all he got was a black eye and a broken head. I should say all that was a fabrication, too ; indeed, I think he rather amuses himself with lies—and brandy-and-water. But you don't want to know anything more about him, Mrs. Rosewarne ? ”

She did not. All that she cared to know was in that little strip of printed paper ; and as she left the room to get ready for the drive, she expressed herself grateful to him in such warm tones that he was rather astonished. After all, as he said to himself, he had had nothing to do in bringing about the marriage of that somewhat gorgeous person in whom Mrs. Rosewarne was so strangely interested.

They were silent as they drove away. There was one happy face amongst them, that of Mrs. Rosewarne ; but she was thinking of her own affairs, in a sort of

pleased reverie. Wenna was timid and a trifle sad ; she said little beyond " Yes, Mr. Trelyon," and " No, Mr. Trelyon," and even that was said in a low voice. As for him, he spoke to her gravely and respectfully : it was already as if she were a mere stranger.

Had some of his old friends and acquaintances seen him now, they would have been something more than astonished. Was this young man, talking in a gentle and courteous fashion to his companion, and endeavouring to interest her in the various things around her, the same dare-devil lad who used to clatter down the main street of Eglosilyan, who knew no control other than his own unruly wishes, and who had no answer but a mocking jest for any remonstrance ?

" And how long do you remain in Penzance, Mr. Trelyon ? " Mrs. Rosewarne said at length.

"Until to-morrow, I expect," he answered.

"To-morrow?"

"Yes; I am going back to Eglosilyan. You know my mother means to give some party or other on my coming of age, and there is so little of that amusement going on at our house that it needs all possible encouragement. After that I mean to leave Eglosilyan for a time."

Wenna said nothing; but her downcast face grew a little paler: it was she who was banishing him.

"By the way," he continued, with a smile, "my mother is very anxious about Miss Wenna's return. I fancy she has been trying to go into that business of the Sewing Club on her own account; and in that case she would be sure to get into a mess. I know her first impulse would be to pay any money to smooth matters over; but that would be a bad beginning, wouldn't it?"

"Yes, it would," Wenna said; but somehow, at this moment, she was less inclined to be hopeful about the future.

"And as for you, Mrs. Rosewarne," he said, "I suppose you will be going home soon, now that the change seems to have done you so much good?"

"Yes, I hope so," she said; "but Wenna must go first. My husband writes to me that he cannot do without her, and offers to send Mabyn instead. Nobody seems to be able to get on without our Wenna."

"And yet she has the most curious fancy that she is of no account to anybody. Why, some day I expect to hear of the people in Eglosilyan holding a public meeting to present her with a service of plate, and an address written on parchment, with blue and gold letters."

"Perhaps they will do that when she gets married," the mother said, ignorant of the stab she was dealing.

It was a picturesque and pleasant bit of country through which they were driving ; yet to two of them at least the afternoon sun seemed to shine over it with a certain sadness. It was as if they were bidding good-bye to some beautiful scene they could scarcely expect to revisit. For many a day thereafter, indeed, Wenna seemed to recollect that drive as though it had happened in a dream. She remembered the rough and lonely road leading up sharp hills and getting down into valleys again ; the masses of ferns and wild flowers by the stone walls ; the wild and undulating country, with its stretches of yellow furze, its clumps of trees, and its huge blocks of grey granite. She remembered their passing into a curious little valley, densely wooded, the winding path of which was not well fitted for a broad carriage and a pair of horses. They had to watch the boughs and branches as they jolted by. The sun was warm

among the foliage ; there was a resinous scent of ferns about. By-and-by the valley abruptly opened on a wide and beautiful picture. Lamorna Cove lay before them, and a cold fresh breeze came in from the sea. Here the world seemed to cease suddenly. All around them were huge rocks, and wild flowers, and trees ; and far up there on their left rose a hill of granite, burning red with the sunset ; but down below them the strange little harbour was in shadow, and the sea beyond, catching nothing of the glow in the west, was grey, and mystic, and silent. Not a ship was visible on that pale plain ; no human being could be seen about the stone quays and the cottages ; it seemed as if they had come to the end of the world, and were its last inhabitants. All these things Wenna thought of in after days, until the odd and plain little harbour of Lamorna and its rocks and bushes and slopes of granite seemed to be

some bit of fairyland, steeped in the rich hues of the sunset, and yet ethereal, distant, and unrecoverable.

Mrs. Rosewarne did not at all understand the silence of these young people, and made many attempts to break it up. Was the mere fact of Mr. Trelyon returning to Eglosilyan next day anything to be sad about? He was not a schoolboy going back to school. As for Wenna, she had got back her engaged ring, and ought to have been grateful and happy.

"Come now," she said, "if you purpose to drive back by the Mouse Hole, we must waste no more time here. Wenna, have you gone to sleep?"

The girl started as if she had really been asleep; then she walked back to the carriage and got in. They drove away again without saying a word.

"What is the matter with you, Wenna? Why are you so downcast?" her mother asked.

“ Oh, nothing ! ” the girl said hastily. “ But—but one does not care to talk much on so beautiful an evening.”

“ Yes, that is quite true,” said Mr. Trelyon, quite as eagerly, and with something of a blush ; “ one only cares to sit and look at things.”

“ Oh, indeed,” said Mrs. Rosewarne, with a smile ; she had never before heard Mr. Trelyon express his views upon scenery.

They drove round by the Mouse Hole, and when they came in sight of Penzance again, the bay, and the semicircle of houses, and St. Michael's Mount, were all of a pale grey in the twilight. As they drove quietly along, they heard the voices of people from time to time ; the occupants of the cottages had come out for their evening stroll and chat. Suddenly, as they were passing certain huge masses of rock that sloped suddenly down to the sea, they heard another sound—that of two or three

boys calling out for help. The briefest glance showed what was going on. These boys were standing on the rocks, staring fixedly at one of their companions who had fallen into the water and was wildly splashing about, while all they could do to help him was to call for aid at the pitch of their voices.

“That chap’s drowning!” Trelyon said, jumping out of the carriage.

The next minute he was out on the rocks, hastily pulling off his coat. What was it he heard just as he plunged into the sea—the agonized voice of a girl calling him back?

Mrs. Rosewarne was at this moment staring at her daughter with almost a horror-stricken look on her face. Was it really Wenna Rosewarne who had been so mean; and what madness possessed her to make her so? The girl had hold of her mother’s arm with both her hands, and held it with

the grip of a vice ; while her white face was turned to the rocks and the sea.

“ Oh, mother ! ” she cried, “ it is only a boy, and he is a man—and there is not another in all the world like him—— ”

“ Wenna, is it you who are speaking ; or a devil ? The boy is drowning ! ”

But he was drowning no longer. He was laid hold of by a strong arm, dragged in to the rocks, and there fished out by his companions. Then Trelyon got up on the rocks, and calmly looked at his dripping clothes.

“ You are a nice little beast, you are ! ” he said to the small boy, who had swallowed a good deal of salt water, but was otherwise quite unhurt.

“ How do you expect I am going home in these trousers ? Perhaps your mother ’ll pay me for a new pair, eh ? And give you a jolly good thrashing for tumbling in ? Here’s a half-crown for you, you young

ruffian; and if I catch you on these rocks again, I'll throw you in and let you swim for it—see if I don't."

He walked up to the carriage, shaking himself, and putting on his coat as he went, with great difficulty.

"Mrs. Rosewarne, I must walk back—I can't think of——"

He uttered a short cry. Wenna was lying as one dead in her mother's arms, Mrs. Rosewarne vainly endeavouring to revive her. He rushed down the rocks again to a pool, and soaked his handkerchief in the water; then he went hurriedly back to the carriage, and put the cool handkerchief on her temples and on her face.

"Oh, Mr. Trelyon, do go away, or you will get your death of cold!" Mrs. Rosewarne said. "Leave Wenna to me. See, there is a gentleman who will lend you his horse, and you will get to your hotel directly."

He did not even answer her. His own face was about as pale as that of the girl before him, and hers was that of a corpse. But by-and-by strange tremors passed through her frame ; her hands tightened their grip of her mother's arm, and, with a sort of shudder, she opened her eyes and fearfully looked around. She caught sight of the young man standing there ; she scarcely seemed to recognize him for a moment. And then, with a quick nervous action, she caught at his hand and kissed it twice, hurriedly and wildly ; then she turned to her mother, hid her face in her bosom, and burst into a flood of tears. Probably the girl scarcely knew all that had taken place ; but her two companions, in silence, and with a great apprehension filling their hearts, saw and recognized the story she had told.

"Mr. Trelyon," said Mrs. Rosewarne, "you must not remain here."

Mechanically he obeyed her. The gentleman who had been riding along the road had dismounted, and, fearing some accident had occurred, had come forward to offer his assistance. When he was told how matters stood, he at once gave Trelyon his horse to ride in to Penzance; and then the carriage was driven off also, at a considerably less rapid pace.

That evening Trelyon, having got into warm clothes and dined, went along to ask how Wenna was. His heart beat hurriedly as he knocked at the door. He had intended merely making the inquiry, and coming away again; but the servant said that Mrs. Rosewarne wished to see him.

He went upstairs, and found Mrs. Rosewarne alone. These two looked at each other; that single glance told everything. They were both aware of the secret that had been revealed.

For an instant there was dead silence

between them ; and then Mrs. Rosewarne, with a great sadness in her voice, despite its studied calmness, said—

“ Mr. Trelyon, we need say nothing of what has occurred. There are some things that are best not spoken of. But I can trust to you not to seek to see Wenna before you leave here. She is quite recovered—only a little nervous, you know, and frightened. To-morrow she will be quite well again.”

“ You will bid her good-bye for me,” he said.

But for the tight clasp of the hand between these two, it was an ordinary parting. He put on his hat and went out. Perhaps it was the cold sea air that had made his face so pale.

8

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